THE

NEGRO

EQUALLED BY FEW

EUROPEANS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

VOL. I.

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THE NEGRO EQUALLED BY FEW EUROPEANS.

TWO hundred years ſince, ſuch an idea would have excited the indignation of Europe. In vain, would it have been, to have talked of the virtues of Negroes. Then, truth was charged with impoſture, and deemed an inſult to man. Our unfortunate anceſtors oppreſſed, in their homes, by the deſpotiſm of the Portugueſe, had, alaſs! no witneſſes of their tears, but the ſtormy heavens of their country. What could they expect from the tribunal of reaſon?

She was too often ſilent while paſſion ſpoke. It was to ſatisfy the avidity of deſire that ſtrangers landed on our coaſts. The ſimple wiſh of inſtructing us, had never led them from their own fertile clime. The thirſt for gold conſumed them. We had too little to give them; and ſoon they hoped to draw from our bodily ſtrength, a more precious merchandiſe.

At that period, the minds of men were agitated with the fury of making diſcoveries. Navigation was riſing out of her infancy. European veſſels crouded the coaſts of Africa; penetrated into the boſom of Aſia; and gave a new world to the ſwords of Cortez and Pizarro.

It may be queſtioned, at this day, if the conqueſt of the two Americas was more

more fatal to the natives than to the people of Africa. Entire races of men deſtroyed! Mexicans, Peruvians, the fierce Carribees, and the peaceful inhabitants of Hiſpaniola: all ſwept from the face of the earth! Such are the titles by which the Americans claim the palm of wretchedneſs. But we! we, ſnatched from our homes, to put on chains from which death alone will releaſe us! We, deſtined from the birth to the ſhame of ſlavery, becauſe at two thouſand leagues from us ſome bloody conquerors have annihilated their new ſubjects! We, torn from our fathers, our brethren, our wives, our children, to cultivate that land in which the ſcattered carcaſes of the ancient poſſeſſors cry out for a vengeance, which we cannot undertake either for them or ourſelves! Are not we more to be pitied than thoſe? They are dead: alas! we

 live!

live! We drag, over their tombs, chains more cruel than death; our blood is daily ſhed on their inſenſible aſhes; and we endure at once the remembrance of their ills, the pangs of our own, and the anguiſh which, as human beings, we feel for the crimes of our perſecutors!

And theſe are men! whole nations of men! who would rather have us for ſlaves than friends. To what end, then, are they taught by philoſophy, by the arts, the ſciences? Do they pretend thoſe ſoften the manners, and elevate the ſoul? We will ſhew them our chains, and ſay to them, what more could barbarians do? To what purpoſe is the ſublime religion they profeſs? Does it inſtruct them to love even their enemies? Ah! we are their brethren! When they landed on our ſhores,

ſhores, they often found hoſpitality, ſometimes defiance; but in receiving, or rejecting them, we equally purſued the impulſe of nature. We have not their intelligence: when we opened our hearts to them, they ſhould have cheriſhed us; when our hearts repelled them, it was their duty to have gained us.

Pardon, virtuous *Ferdinand!* pardon the ſentiments which are extorted from me by the remembrance of miſeries to which I have ſeen my countrymen delivered. I have forgotten my own. Long ſince has your friendſhip effaced them all. But this friendſhip impels me to preſerve your eſteem; you would bluſh for me, if the virtues of a European had ſtrucken from my memory the ills which white people have heaped upon the heads of negroes.

Yet I will not confound the preſent age with the times in which ſovereigns, their miniſters, their people, heard with indifference, the recital of our torments, and ſmiled on the unfeeling planter, who preſented himſelf gliſtening with the gold he had acquired by our blood. European hearts are ſaid to be ſoftened. Humanity is heard; they ſpeak of lightening our chains; perhaps of breaking them. And what riſk you, Europeans? Prove our friendſhip. Believe me, you ſhall be richer for it. Attachment gives double force to the arm. Had I not been attracted by this ray of hope, I had left my adventures in oblivion. But Europeans ſhall now hear me. Europeans ſhall learn, from me, what are the men whom they have devoted to diſdain.

I was

I was born in 17**, on the borders of the Senegal. My father was a brother of the ſovereign of our nation. I ſhall call my uncle *Siratik*, (1)* a name which, in the language of the country, ſignifies king. A minute account of my education muſt not be expected. It is well known to what narrow limits our education is confined. We are taught few duties, for our ſyſtem of morality does not extend to nice diſtinctions; compelled to little ſtudy, becauſe our inſtruction compriſes only general objects. In bodily exerciſes, in drawing the bow, running, ſwimming, wreſtling, and hunting, in ſuch occupations paſs away the uniform days of the negro youths. Heaven has not been willing that the arts and ſciences ſhould viſit us. We learn what is uſe-

* See the notes at the end of each volume.

ful, nothing more; our views are directed only to the wants of nature. The moſt robuſt and moſt active negro becomes the richeſt. He who combats the enemies of his country with the greateſt ſucceſs, the nobleſt. But neither this nobility nor theſe riches deſcend to poſterity. A negro who, like myſelf, could look back to twenty anceſtors ſucceſſively on the throne, remains notwithſtanding in the ordinary claſs of citizens. The ſtate is the ſole heir of individuals. Children, on the death of their father, are obliged to find, in their induſtry or valour, the ſource of a new fortune; which, in its turn, becomes the public treaſure.

If our education were more finiſhed, we ſhould equal, perhaps ſurpaſs, Europeans. We do not yield to them in addreſs; and addreſs announces a degree

gree of intelligence which, with culture, would embrace the greateſt objects. To diſpute the qualities of the heart with us would be too injurious; education does not create, it does but give a poliſh to thoſe.

With us there is no knowledge of that fatal *I*—whoſe partial feeling renders men inſenſible with grace, obdurate with politeneſs, implacable with urbanity. We have not the art of making offers without giving; but we give without any offer. We do not condole without affording ſuccour; but we ſuccour without condolement. The impoſing words of *honour*, *fidelity*, *delicacy*, *attachment*, are unknown to us; but we are faithful to our word, we love our wives, we ſerve our friends, we treat ſtrangers as we would they ſhould treat us. The unremitting practice of

thoſe actions has rendered the names which might be ſubſtituted for them unneceſſary. In fine, we do not poſſeſs ſuperb palaces, in which we might ſhun the eye of miſery; we inhabit huts only, which are alike open to the poor and the rich, the ſtranger and the friend; and beneath whoſe roof wearineſs never enters, becauſe luxury is not to be found there.

I have not to complain of Nature. She endowed me with a robuſt form, a diſtinguiſhed height. To that, ſhe added the beauty of my nation: a jet black, a full forehead, piercing eyes, a large mouth, and fine teeth. Such was the veil. What did it conceal? A profound ſenſibility, patience which approached to obſtinacy, a courage of mind bordering on fierceneſs, a diſdain for obſtacles, a goodneſs of heart, which

which fed alternately on the benefits it conferred and received. Such was my character: if it announced virtues, it ſuppoſed faults; nor was I deſtitute of them. My ſenſibility often wandered from my prudence; my courage was blind; my credulity extreme; and the impetuoſity of my mind cauſed me ſometimes to forget that all men have need of indulgence.

Itanoko was the name I received at my birth. Love watched over my cradle; and my eyes no ſooner diſtinguiſhed objects, than I felt the charms of *Amelia*.

It will ſeem aſtoniſhing, that the object of my paſſion bore a European name. *Amelia*, however, was an African; but her father was a native of France. The unfortunate *Dumont* (that

was her father's name) had been ſhip-wrecked at the mouth of the river Gambia. He alone ſurvived the loſs of the veſſel, which he commanded. An excellent ſwimmer, he owed the preſervation of his life to the ſtrength of his arms and conſtitution. Caſt upon an unknown land, covered with contuſions which he received from the points of rocks againſt which the waves had daſhed him, worn out with hunger and fatigue, ſtill had he the courage to triumph over deſpair.

His maritime knowledge flattered him with the hopes of gaining the river Senegal, by following the coaſt. After twenty-four hours ceſſation from fatigue, during which he had no other bed than the ſand of the ſhore, and no other refreſhment than ſome ſhell-fiſh which the waves had depoſited at his feet

feet, he began his journey. Throughout the day, he dreaded the ſight of men; in the night, he ſhuddered at the ferocity of animals, whoſe howlings filled him with terror. His food was wild fruits, and he trembled while he plucked them.

In this manner he wandered a month, during which he ſeldom yielded to ſleep. At length he found himſelf at the mouth of a river whoſe oppoſite bank was covered with a thick foreſt which extended beyond the reach of ſight, along the ſhores of the ſea. The weakneſs to which he was reduced, the breadth of the current, the fear of ſtraying in ſuch an immenſe foreſt, compelled him to proceed up the river, without attempting to croſs it. He did not doubt but it was one of the branches of the Senegal, but ſaw it was not that in which European

ropean veſſels are accuſtomed to anchor. He felt that this new direction, which he was driven to take, muſt lengthen his journey; and he purſued it with grief. One day, ſinking beneath wearineſs and want of ſleep, he threw himſelf down at a little diſtance from the city where I was born. Some negroes, conducted to the place by their employment of fiſhing, perceived him lying without ſenſe or motion. The appearance of a white man aſtoniſhed them, but they approached him; he ſtill breathed, and they haſtened to carry him to the city. On his recovering, he was terrified to find himſelf in the midſt of a vaſt quantity of people, whom curioſity had aſſembled; but the kind careſſes of his hoſts, their tender cares, their officious friendſhip, inſenſibly diſſipated his fears. At firſt, the neceſſity of his regaining his ſtrength

ſtrength detained him among us; but ſoon, the charms of our innocent life gently won him to our ſociety. The remembrance of his country weakened gradually; an attachment, which he felt for one of our women, effaced it for ever. *Siratik* received him with goodneſs. To expreſs his gratitude, he learned our language; he recounted his misfortunes, and we loved him the better for them. The ſovereign and his ſubjects contended for the happineſs of rendering his fate agreeable. He married the female whom he loved; the nation conſtructed a dwelling for him, gave him lands, taught him to cultivate them; and the birth of *Amelia* rendered indiſſoluble the new ties which attached him to Africa.

Dumont had the amiable manners of his country without its frivolity, its in-

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conſtancy; and in him the charms of underſtanding gave a grace to the qualities of the heart. A brother whom he had left in Europe was the only object of his regrets. They had loſt in their infancy their father and their mother. The benedictions of theſe parents had been their only heritage. A relation undertook the charge of their education; they would have repaid his cares, but death ſnatched him from them, when they more than ever ſtood in need of a director.

Dumont choſe the ſea. His good conduct procured him the poſt of captain in the merchant-ſervice, which he filled with honour, when the ſea ſwallowed up his veſſel, his companions, all that he poſſeſſed. Content with his lot, informed by the philoſophy which teaches that man is dear to God, by the

the virtues he exerciſes, not by the climate he inhabits, he thought it his duty to accept with gratitude the new country which Heaven had given him as a recompenſe for the confidence which he placed in his infinite goodneſs.

He was but four-and-twenty when my countrymen received him. I was then in my infancy. He was loved by all; but my father, who by his rank ſerved him more than others, loved him ſtill more. That ſpecies of ſympathy, that analogy of ſentiment, which prepares, forms and draws together the ties of the heart, had ſtrictly united them. I may ſay, then, I was reared in the boſom of *Dumont*; for he loved the father too much not to love the ſon. I knew the French, almoſt as ſoon as my native language. The aſſiduity of *Dumont* had alſo taught that

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to his wife and my father; and the two families compoſed, in the depth of Africa, a ſociety ſo entire, that we could have lived ſeparated from every human being.

Thus it was that Nature, in placing me near *Amelia*, made me feel the neceſſity of loving her, of pleaſing her, of repaying to her without reſerve the tenderneſs with which her father honoured me. The endearing names of ſiſter and brother were to us the happy preſage of titles more endearing, which we one day looked for. Peaceable ſentiments! delicious moments of infancy! what have become of you! why muſt you be ſucceeded by every ſpecies of ill which the paſſions of men can produce!

Dumont permitted me to remain till the age of twelve, without any other inſtruc-

inſtruction than that of children of my own age and country, excepting the French language, in which I every day improved. But with pleaſure he ſaw a curioſity pervade me which I could not diſſemble, and which he promiſed to himſelf to uſe as the means of conducting me inſenſibly to the important truths for which man is born. If he ſpoke to my father of the power, the magnificence of France; of the genius, politeneſs, affability, of his countrymen; of the diſcoveries and ſciences of Europe; I liſtened to him with an attention which could not eſcape his obſervation. My father, at one of theſe times, ſaid to him, I cannot doubt the happineſs which is the lot of your country. How many thouſand negroes have been taken from our coaſts by European veſſels. The right of war permits us to diſpoſe of thoſe pri-

priſoners we take in battle, and we deliver them up as trifles. Alas! the Europeans are more virtuous than we are. Influenced by humanity, they come to ſnatch them from our chains. The negroes muſt be happy with them; for none have ever returned to their families. *Dumont* was ſilent; his colour became a deep red; but it did not draw our attention. We were yet ignorant that the ſouls of white men can expreſs itſelf on their viſage.

I could not ceaſe to liſten to *Dumont*'s leſſons. He did not ceaſe to repeat to me what I had already heard a hundred times. I eagerly demanded the reaſon of every thing which I ſaw him do contrary to our cuſtoms. "Why did he not eat in our manner? Why had he made habits for himſelf, his wife, and daughter?" He anſwered

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me with goodneſs. He ſhewed me the charms which there are in decency, modeſty, and purity of manners.

There was but one of his actions reſpecting which he was ſilent, and that ſilence was intended to excite my curioſity. Every evening and morning I ſaw him proſtrate himſelf; while his wife and child did the ſame. He drew from his pocket an aſſemblage of ſmall leaves, ſtrongly ſewed together. I perceived on them a multitude of black marks regularly arranged, the meaning of which were unknown to me. It was eaſy to ſee that this little book (for ſuch it was) had been damaged by wet. I did not doubt but that he had ſaved it from the ſhipwreck; for I had never ſeen any thing like it among our countrymen. He fixed his eyes upon it, pronounced a ſet of words with enthuſiaſm

ſiaſm. Theſe words were neither of the Negro nor French language; but their harmony was exceedingly delightful. I alſo threw myſelf on my knees. I ſtrongly joined my little hands together. Like him, I raiſed my eyes to Heaven. I was apprehenſive of forgetting the leaſt circumſtance of a ſcene ſo new to me. It ſeemed that all this rendered *Dumont* more dear to me. At one of theſe times, I threw myſelf into his arms. Inform me, ſaid I, why do you do thus? He embraced me. Tears of joy ſprang from his eyes. It is not yet time, anſwered he.

I approached my thirteenth year. One day, when I had preſſed him more earneſtly than uſual on the ſubject, without obtaining any ſatisfactory anſwer, his refuſal truly offended me. I

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ſaw him ſmile at the little marks of my impatience and that redoubled it. Every thing diſpleaſed me; even *Amelia* could ſcarcely chaſe away my chagrin: I experienced a ſecret inquietude of which I could give no account. So true it is that the worſhip of the divinity becomes neceſſary to man, in the inſtant that the ſlighteſt notion of a ſupreme Being is awakened in the ſoul.

When *Dumont* ſaw the ſun deſcending towards the horizon, he ſaid, Will *Itanoko* walk with me? At firſt I was tempted to refuſe him, but I had not the power. My ſelf-love was wounded, but my heart was not. I feared to grieve *Dumont*. We walked. Inſenſibly he turned his converſation to his country; and he ſpoke to me of the grandeur, the majeſty, and the ſumptuouſneſs of its temples. This word was new to me.

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It called forth all my attention. I heard with tranſport the deſcription of a temple. My dear *Dumont*, ſaid I, what pleaſure to liſten to you! A temple muſt be ſuperb. How grand the ſpectacle of her rich ornaments, her precious vaſes, her prieſts clothed in linen! How charming the ſound of that harmonious muſic! But you have never ſpoken to me of this before. Why theſe vaſt edifices? Why this pomp? Why this incenſe?

While I thus interrogated him, we had gained the top of a hill which overlooked the country. The ſeaſon of rains was paſſed. The ſtorms were fled. The heavens were ſerene; and the air bore, on its boſom, the ſweet perfumes which aroſe from the flowers profuſely ſcattered on the plain. Never had nature ſeemed ſo delightful to me. The eye

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in its rapid courſe wandered around an immenſe horizon. It beheld the majeſtic Senegal haſtening from a ſource unknown to the ſea with its peaceful waves. Vaſt foreſts, diverſified paſtures, numerous huts enriched its banks. The ſun deprived of his fierceneſs was ſinking into another hemiſphere; and the moon was ſlowly riſing over the mountains of Lybia.

Behold this ſpectacle! ſaid *Dumont* to me. Does it ſay nothing to your heart? It raviſhes my ſenſes, cried I. Ah how happy is man to ſee it, to enjoy it, and to feel that he enjoys it. Without doubt, replied *Dumont:* but if he knows not the hand that created theſe ſcenes, he has no more enjoyment of them than animals. Know you the Being who ſuſtains thoſe burning globes, whoſe warmth brings your

harveſt to the birth, and whoſe rays diſſipate the obſcurity of your nights? Do you know the power who caſts forth this river from the entrails of the earth? Who covers its ſides with thoſe exquiſite flowers; with thoſe woods whoſe ſhade repels the heat of day; thoſe animals whoſe milk nouriſhes you; thoſe birds whoſe ſong amuſes your ear? No, replied I, but he muſt be good and infinitely powerful. Ah, cried he, this being ſo good, ſo powerful, is your God, is my God, is the God of the univerſe. For you, for man, he created this ſcene which charms you. He has created yourſelf to enjoy it: not to be an ingrate. Such benefactions merit your gratitude: ſhould you not love him then? He alone, if you offend him, can deprive you of them: ſhould you not fear him then? He alone has the power to fill

you

you with proſperity: then ſhould you not adore him? And now behold yourſelf informed of the motive of that action which you ſee me repeat every day. It is before him that I humiliate myſelf. At his feet, I proſtrate myſelf to demand, not an increaſe of bleſſings which he has laviſhed on me, but of the virtues which render me worthy of his benefactions. On the riſing of the ſun, I pay to him my firſt homage; and when the return of night calls me to ſleep, my laſt ſentiments are due to him.——"Privileged mortal! Is it to you alone that God is known? We, though men like yourſelf, we do not know him."——"You do not, but one day you will. The people of Europe know him, and aſſemble to adore him; and hence the origin of thoſe temples, of that worſhip which I have juſt deſcribed."——"And do the Eu-

ropeans, like you, demand virtues of that Being?"——"It is their duty."——"Then your people are the worthieſt on the earth."——"They ought to be ſo," anſwered *Dumont*, with a ſigh.

Night approached. We returned to our habitation. My heart was full. A new and delicate ſatisfaction had infuſed itſelf into all my feelings. One thing alone ſtill gave me inquietude. I wiſhed to be entirely freed from my doubts. Is your God, ſaid I to him, alſo the God of *Amelia*?—— Yes, he anſwered with tranſport; and I hope will be in every moment of her exiſtence. 'Tis done, I cried. The God of *Amelia* ſhall be mine. I ſee that he has the power of beſtowing virtues.

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Not one inſtant of the night ſaw me cloſe my eyes. My converſation with *Dumont* had ſhed on all the objects which ſurrounded me an intereſt which till then they wanted. My father, my mother, my young comrade *Otourou*, our hut, even my paroquet, every thing, which till then had ſeemed indifferent enough to me, preſented itſelf in a ſeducing form. God of *Dumont!* ſaid I to myſelf, is it then for the preſervation of my life that thou haſt taught my father to fold me in his arms? Is it to ſoften my vexations that thou giveſt a tender heart to *Otourou?* Is it to guard me againſt the ſtorms that thou buildeſt this hut for me? Is it to amuſe my leiſure that thou doſt render this bird ſo tractable? Without thee I ſhould not have all theſe? It ſeemed to me that an unknown voice anſwered No,

without doubt. I liſtened, but heard no more of it. "O give me then, God of *Dumont*, the virtues which pleaſe thee." I was in bed. A ſudden movement which I made, threw down my arrows which hung near me. Theſe arrows, that till then had ſo greatly amuſed me, now cauſed me an involuntary emotion of horror. I threw them from me with a trembling hand, ſaying, "It is not the God of *Dumont* who has given me theſe, for they deſtroy men, they deſtroy the animals they ſtrike: I feel that the ſight of ſufferings is no pleaſure to me. But, perhaps, there alſo is a god of evil, of whom *Dumont* has not ſpoken to me." This idea gave me pain: alas! I was ignorant that the paſſions of men were the origin of that evil, which, in my trouble, I exalted into a divinity.

Scarcely

Scarcely was it day when I flew to *Dumont*. My mind was conſumed with doubt. I overwhelmed him with queſtions. He had commenced too happily with me not to proceed. He found me yet exempt from vices and prejudices; and in a few months the Chriſtian religion was fully known to me.

I attained my eighteenth year. *Dumont* often propoſed to conduct me to the ſea-coaſt, in order to find ſome European ſettlements where I might altogether embrace the religion he had taught me. The journey was not without danger. We muſt traverſe ſome countries inimicable to us. My father, alarmed by theſe reflections, by his friendſhip for *Dumont*, by his affection for me, oppoſed the deſign. The wife of *Dumont* felt theſe alarms ſtill more

ſtrongly. She knew that her daughter muſt be of the party; and the fear of loſing, perhaps, for ever, her huſband and her child ſtruck ſo forcibly on her mind, that ſhe exerted her utmoſt influence with *Dumont* to deter him from its execution. For me beſide the attachment which I had really conceived for the religion of my friend, I had another intereſt extremely powerful with my heart to haſten my departure. *Dumont* had declared, that he could not permit me to be the huſband of *Amelia* till both of us were baptized; and till our marriage could be conſecrated at the foot of the altar. *Dumont* had inſtructed me, and I had inſtructed my comrade *Otourou*. What ſhould we fear? did I often ſay to the father of *Amelia*. We are three. We are brave; you are prudent. What dangers are there that we

we may not face with the aid of courage and of wiſdom ? It is eaſy for us to defend ourſelves if we are attacked ; it will be ſtill more eaſy to ſhun our enemies. The thickneſs of the woods, the diſtance of the habitations, every thing favors us. If *Amelia* is overcome with fatigue, *Otourou* and I are ſtrong ; we will carry her. *Dumont*, whoſe feelings accorded with mine, eaſily yielded to my reaſons. He ſpoke with ſuch energy to my father, to his wife, that they no longer heſitated. They themſelves determined to accompany us; and though the next day was not fixed for the day of our departure, it was becauſe our harveſt was at hand. Fatal delay ! The firſt ſignal of all my miſeries !

Our harveſt was ready ; it was abundant. Every one laboured inceſ-

ſantly during the day; and at night the general joy was announced by ſhouts, ſongs, and dances: the uſual relaxation of the fatigues of negroes. I was in a rapturous delirium. I thought of nothing but my future happineſs; I talked of nothing but our journey. My love for *Amelia* was extreme. I ſaw her, I adored her, I never quitted her for an inſtant: yet, ſuch was the violence of my deſires, that I forgot the felicity in my power; and I reſembled a man, who, long ſeparated from the object of his tenderneſs, counts the minutes which bring near the day in which he ſhall return to her.

Otourou, who had but one ſoul with me, partook of my happineſs; but in his own manner. I, ever impetuous, I looked only to the ſucceſs of my wiſhes. He, calm and patient, did but

but ſtudy the means to inſure that ſucceſs. It ſeemed that nature had founded our friendſhip on the difference of our characters; or rather that ſhe had deſigned *Otourou* to be my guardian angel. His father, whom he had never ſeen, was a negro of a neighbouring village. He had diſappeared in a war between our nation and the people of Galam, and had left his wife pregnant. On the return of peace this woman, named *Atiliba*, came to the court of *Siratik*, with the hope of hearing intelligence of her huſband. Her inquiries were vain; my father joined his to them, but without ſucceſs. He kindly took her to his own home, where ſhe was delivered of *Otourou*; and grief ſoon after conducted her to the tomb. Her infant found, in my father, that humanity which is often more compaſſionate than nature.

Otourou

Otourou and I had but one cradle; and he was my brother before years made him my friend.

I dare declare that we reſembled each other only in courage; and with this difference even there, that I ruſhed on dangers the moment I perceived them, while *Otourou* only oppoſed himſelf to them when they were inevitable. Always cool, always peaceable, he ſmiled at my ſallies, but he did not thwart them. Maſter of his mind, of his paſſions, all his being acted in obedience to his judgment: my judgment was a ſlave to the ardour of my character. Did I wiſh for any thing? Did it not meet his wiſhes? He began to wiſh as I did, and I ſoon finiſhed by having no wiſh but his. The nature of his goodneſs, his generoſity, his friendſhip was not the ſame as mine. With me

theſe

theſe virtues ſpread without, like a torrent; with him they acted ſilently within. His were concealed, but ſolid; they were mute, but active. In ſhort, generally more perfect than I, in forgetting injuries he was inferior to me. And here again appeared the effect of our different temperaments. In me, anger burſt into a ſtorm; and was ſoon ſucceeded by a calm. She took up her dwelling with him. Vengeance never was extinguiſhed in his breaſt, or only when it was loſt in the coldneſs of diſdain.

Otouron, who ſaw each day my eagerneſs for our journey, thought of nothing but the means of diminiſhing its dangers. Without opening his deſign to any one, he quitted his home, and advanced ſo far into the country of our enemy, that he diſcovered, from a high

a high mountain, the ſea-coaſt and ſome habitations, which, by their ſtructure, (new to him) he judged to be European. Alone, and avoiding all eyes, he examined the different paths; remarked thoſe which, more diſtant from the villages, were conſequently leſs dangerous; and, aſſured of the accuracy of his obſervations, became ſufficiently inſtructed to ſerve as a faithful guide during the darkneſs of the nights: a time which he regarded as moſt propitious for our little troop to traverſe the country without peril.

During his abſence, which laſted eight days, we felt conſiderable inquietude; and, above all, myſelf. Much greater would have been our uneaſineſs, had we known the danger to which he expoſed his life, or at leaſt his liberty, by this expedition.

On

On his return, uſing equal precaution as in going, he had marched one whole night to croſs a foreſt, which he knew to be frequented during the day by our enemies. He had proceeded ſo far by ſun-riſe, that he flattered himſelf he ſhould ſoon be ſecure from danger. He knew that the boundaries of this foreſt were ſcarcely ſeparated from our territories by a quarter of a league, and already revelled in the pleaſure which the recital of his diſcoveries would give us. Animated with this idea, he preſſed forward; and, in a few minutes, he arrived ſo near the confines of the foreſt, as to diſtinguiſh the ſhort tract of land which he had yet to paſs. Judge of his terror when he perceived the little plain, which ſeparated him from his country, covered with a multitude of negroes, whoſe movements, cries, and arms, ſufficiently

ſufficiently marked the hoſtile deſigns which aſſembled them in this place. He remained immoveable; and often has he ſince avowed to me, that never had any other danger ſo cruelly alarmed his mind. Flight was impracticable. On his left was the Senegal, whoſe rapid courſe did not leave a hope that he could ſwim far enough up the ſtream to be out of danger. On his right, the country of theſe ſame negroes extended in the form of a creſcent around our territories; and the point of the creſcent which he muſt gain to avoid the enemies whom he had in front, was preciſely the quarter of their country which was moſt inhabited. When his fear was ſufficiently diſſipated to admit of reflection, he reſolved on the only expedient which ſeemed left him. It was, to plunge into the foreſt, and there to wait the return of night which might

might afford him ſome opportunity of eſcaping. A new reflection ſuddenly ſeized him. It ſprang from the love of his country. The poſition of theſe negroes left no doubt that their deſign was againſt us; and that they hoped to ſurprize us while the harveſt, having ſcattered our people, ſeemed to promiſe them a more eaſy booty. He felt how important it was to aſſure himſelf of their deſigns; and he hoped, if he could gain that knowledge, he might, favoured by his ſwiftneſs of foot, reach the court of *Siratik*, and ſpread the alarm time enough for our defence. He returned towards the enemy. He choſe a tree on the extremity of the foreſt, the higheſt and fulleſt of leaves, and ſoon gained the top. There he reſolved to watch the operations of the enemy, and to wait either their departure, or the night, which might

might enable him to paſs through them undiſcovered.

He ſoon perceived that this plain was the place of general rendezvous; becauſe, as different bodies of troops marched into it, they piled their arms in a heap, and each of them mingled with the parties already arrived, or threw himſelf on the earth to repoſe. The ſmoak of ſome fires, which he obſerved, confirmed the idea that they would paſs the day at leaſt in that poſition.

All was quiet till ten in the morning, when they ſuddenly roſe up and formed themſelves into various diviſions. Their general arrived. *Otourou* diſtinguiſhed him by his palanquin, and the eſcort which ſurrounded him. He paſſed ſucceſſively before each diviſion, and remained ſome minutes with each. After

ter this ſpecies of review, the army directed its march towards the foreſt. *Otourou* was alarmed; but quickly regained his coolneſs, when he recollected the height of the tree, and the thickneſs of the foliage that hid him. The heat of the day, which began to be powerfully felt, had been the cauſe of this movement; and the negroes had ſcarcely gained the ſhade of the foreſt when they diſperſed, to paſs away the time according to their various pleaſures. The tree which hid *Otourou* was not neglected. A ſcore of negroes laid themſelves down beneath its branches; and this neighbourhood enabled him to hear every word of their diſcourſe.

He learned that they would yet remain three days in the plain, waiting for *Damel* their king, whom they expected to head their army in perſon, with

with a deſign of making an irruption into our country. *Otourou* was delighted to hear of this delay, and hoped he ſhould be happy enough to elude the enemies with which he was ſurrounded, and to give us the intelligence time enough to prevent a ſurprize.

In the ſituation of *Otourou* the leaſt circumſtance is alarming, and an accident had inevitably loſt him, but for his preſence of mind. So greatly had his attention been occupied, that he did not perceive ſome vultures who had eſtabliſhed their airy at a little diſtance above his head. The young ones were already ſtrong, and the parents had departed in ſearch of their prey. It was near mid-day when theſe birds returned, and alighting near their dwelling, divided among their little family the repaſt which they had provided. Hitherto

therto the ſpectacle rather amuſed *Otourou*; but the ſcene was ſoon changed. One of the young birds, ſpringing with joy from branch to branch, perceived *Otourou*, and inſtantly uttered a ſcream of terror. The ſignal ſpread the alarm among theſe animals. The young ones diſperſed among the leaves, and the parents, reſolved not to abandon them, darted in irregular and violent flights around the tree. It excited the aſtoniſhment of the negroes below; and *Otourou* ſoon ſaw more than a hundred ſurround his retreat, with their eyes raiſed upward to diſcover the cauſe which alarmed theſe vultures. He felt the danger that threatened him, and his diſmay was extreme when he ſaw ſome negroes already climbing the tree. Suddenly he made an effort to divert their attention, by an unexpected ſight. He ſeized one of the little vultures,

which

which had placed itſelf within his reach, and, ſtifling it within his hands, precipitated it to the ground. The negroes ran to examine this object; thoſe who had mounted the tree deſcended. The vultures became more furious; and if theſe animals had joined courage to the great ſtrength given them by nature (2) they would have repaid theſe negroes the inquietude which they cauſed to poor *Otouru*.

Mean while the cries of the birds, and noiſe of the negroes, drew the attention of the army on every ſide. They hurried to the place by hundreds, and ſoon by thouſands. Curioſity each inſtant increaſed. But they no longer talked of climbing the tree; they ſpoke only of giving it to the flames. Scarcely could the trembling limbs of *Otourou* ſupport him. He could only pronounce

nounce, Oh, God of *Dumont!* do not abandon me!

Already more than an hundred hands had heaped dry branches round the trunk. Already had they lighted firebrands to kindle the flame, when *Otourou* (whoſe cool courage never forſook him but for a moment) availed himſelf of the ſuperſtition of theſe negroes, and cried out, with all the force he could give his voice, "Depart, profane wretches, and fly my fury. I am the deity (*Fetiche*) of this foreſt (3). I have puniſhed theſe deſpicable birds, becauſe they have inſulted me. I will puniſh you alſo, if you diſturb my repoſe." The thunderbolt is not ſwifter than the effect which theſe words produced. Affright was pourtrayed on the countenance of this ſilly multitude. Some took to flight, others

others proſtrated themſelves on the earth, all ſwore the tree had ſpoken to them. The prieſts interfered: till evening they made continual ſacrifices to the pretended divinity.

When the ſun was ſet, the negroes removed to a diſtance from this place, from thence become ſacred; and the poor *Otourou*, availing himſelf of their religious terror, deſcended from the tree; croſſed the little plain; and the following day threw himſelf into our arms.

Extreme was our joy. We overwhelmed him with embraces. We did but releaſe him to confound him with queſtions. "Where have you been? Why did you go? What have you done? What has happened?" *Otourou* was himſelf in a kind of delirium. He laughed,

laughed, wept, vaulted into the air, embraced us a moment; then again laughed, wept, and embraced us. My friends, ſaid he at length, I have been on the point of loſing you; but, thank God, behold me ſafe, and I have returned happier than ever. I wiſhed to ſerve my friends; and Heaven, to recompenſe me for this deſign, has procured me the happineſs of ſaving my country. Our attention redoubled, and we heard with avidity the recital of his adventures. My father begged his indulgence for requeſting that he would, notwithſtanding his fatigue, accompany him to the court of *Siratik*.

As a reward for his fidelity, *Siratik* decorated *Otourou* with a chain of gold. A council was ſummoned to deliberate on the means of repelling the attack.

Couriers were diſpatched that night into the villages, to order all the negroes capable of ſervice to aſſemble with ſpeed on the frontiers, by which it was imagined *Damel* would penetrate into our territory. In the interim, ſix thouſand men (who formed nearly the whole guard of *Siratik)* and all the youths of the city received orders to march the next day to oppoſe the firſt efforts of the enemy. *Siratik*, prevented by infirmities from heading the army, conferred the command on my father, who prepared to depart with the advanced guard.

My father, in the converſations which he had held with *Dumont*, perceived how much the Europeans excelled us in the art of war, and he prevailed on *Dumont* to follow him. With reſpect to force, *Dumont* could not be of

of much ſervice, having none of thoſe murderous arms which have ſubjected all the people of the univerſe to the Europeans; but he hoped that his natural ſagacity would ſupply what art refuſed him.

In this general commotion, *Otouron* and I did not wiſh to remain inactive. We prepared to follow my father and *Dumont*. Eaſily will be conceived the ſorrowful ſituation of *Amelia* and her mother. The latter ſaw an adored huſband flying to the combat, induced rather by generoſity than duty; and the motive which armed him for the defence of a people whom ſhe had rendered dear to him, redoubled in her the fear of loſing him. The heart of the young *Amelia* was divided between a father and a lover. The preſervation of either of them would be no conſo-

lation to her, for the loſs of either; and ſhe muſt ſee them return together, or for ever renounce the conſolations of love and of nature.

I will not dwell on the picture of our ſeparation. Behold *Dumont* ſtruggling to diſengage himſelf from the embraces of his wife and daughter, and to conceal his ſighs. I at the feet of *Amelia*, my voice ſuffocated with ſobs. My forehead bathed with her tender tears. Tears! at once dear and cruel to my heart. *Otourou*, a ſilent ſpectator of this mournful ſcene. Rending ſituation! which could not long be endured. *Dumont*, more reſolute than I, tore himſelf from the arms of his wife. My wife! my child! ſaid he, never forget the God whom I have made known to you. See the wiſhes of a father, of a lover! Again he looks upon them. Throws himſelf

himſelf into their arms. Again diſengages himſelf, and eſcapes from their ſight. *Otourou* ſeizes me, (ſtill on my knees), drags me along with him, and ſoon are we far from places ſo endearing to my tenderneſs. Places! which I muſt never more behold.

Was it ſome voice within that warned me of the evils in which I was about to plunge? Often had I wiſhed for the very day which now was preſent with me. Often had the wounds of our old men enflamed my courage. I had marked the honours with which it loaded their declining days. I had felt a burning deſire to merit ſuch honours. Even the idea of *Amelia* gave a new value to them. My vows, my wiſhes had been bent to this moment. Now all were fled. Honour, glory, courage, none of them flattered me more. I

ſeemed to march to the torture. Nothing could enter my mind but the loſs of *Amelia*. I cried aloud, Never ſhall I ſee her more. *Otourou* blamed me. I blamed myſelf. I own it; the fear of ſhame alone chained me to the ranks of our warriors.

A march of two days brought us to the frontiers of our country: that is to ſay, within a league of the plain where *Otourou* met with the enemy. *Dumont* had never ſerved in his own country, and his knowledge of tactics was only ſuch as he had gathered from his reading in his youth. It would have been nothing in Europe; with us it was conſiderable. Some days were neceſſary to aſſemble the army; and in the mean time to check the efforts of the enemy was all that prudence could expect. *Dumont* choſe an advantageous ſituation

ſituation for our *ſix thouſand* men. He ſtrengthened his right by the Senegal, and his left by a deep and wide foſſe, which by a curve he extended along the front of the camp to the river. He placed advanced guards before the foſſe, and taught the negroes, ignorant of diſcipline, that on their vigilance alone could the army venture to take any repoſe. He viſited them frequently during the night, to ſee that the orders which he gave, in the name of my father, were faithfully executed.

The enemy did not yet appear, and *Dumont* chooſing twenty intelligent and active negroes, ordered them to advance, with precaution, and reconnoitre their poſition; and, as nearly as poſſible, their forces.

Mean while our army increaſed every inſtant, and the fourth day it amounted to fifty thouſand men. *Dumont* judging that we might engage on this ground with advantage, encamped the new troops (as they arrived) between the ditch on the left, and a wood which was about a league diſtant: leaving the ſix thouſand men in their former poſition.

The party which were ſent to reconnoitre, joining courage to addreſs, had approached the enemy ſo near as to make ſome of the ſtragglers priſoners. From theſe we learned that they believed us to be without apprehenſion, and expected to find an eaſy prey; that they would have made an irruption into our country ſome days ſince, but had waited for *Damel*, who had but juſt arrived; finally, that their army amounted

ed to forty thouſand men; and that we might ſoon expect to ſee the van advancing towards us.

My father inſtantly aſſembled the council of war, and *Dumont* had hitherto ſerved them too eſſentially not to be invited to it. The greateſt part of the chiefs were of opinion, that they ought to march toward the enemy, and attack them with the advantage ariſing from their ſurpriſe, and ignorance of our ſtrength. *Dumont* almoſt alone combated this advice. Why, ſaid he, place in the hands of chance that which is in our own power? Perhaps the enemy believe us ignorant of their deſign, and ſo have neglected every kind of precaution; but it is our duty to ſuppoſe the contrary. They may have ſent ſpies which we have not perceived: the facility with which theſe priſoners

ſuffered themſelves to be taken, may be a trick to lull us into a perfidious ſecurity; foreſeeing the march which you propoſe, they may plant the road with ambuſcades. Should we be thus ſurpriſed and routed, what remains but to deliver our defenceleſs wives and children to the unjuſt fury of enemies, to the implacable inſolence of conquerors? Will you confide in me? Remain then in the poſition which you now occupy. If they will enter our country, they muſt attack us; and if they attack us, they are vanquiſhed.

The wiſdom of this counſel was acknowledged; all reſolved to wait for the enemy in our encampment; and my father, whoſe confidence in *Dumont* was without bounds, beſought him to make the neceſſary diſpoſitions for the battle.

It was agreed that, as ſoon as the enemy ſhould appear on the plain, that part of the army ranged between the foſſe and the wood ſhould be drawn out in order of battle, while the ſix thouſand, who were firſt encamped, ſhould remain concealed in their entrenchments. *Dumont* adviſed my father to head a body which were poſted near the wood, and recommended to him to make a moſt vigorous defence, to give time for other movements which he had concerted. To a nephew of *Siratik* he gave the command of a body of troops which were placed near the foſſe, on the left of the ſix thouſand men. He ordered them to ſuſtain the enemy's attack for ſome time; then to feign a flight, and retreat till the purſuers ſhould have paſſed the ſix thouſand. Thoſe he ordered to lie on the earth, and not to riſe till a certain ſignal

ſhould be given them. He gave to an intelligent negro the conduct of a detachment of ten thouſand, which he placed in the cavities of the foſſe. He commanded theſe to keep themſelves concealed till the ſix thouſand ſhould be engaged with that part of the enemy who would drive back the troops commanded by the nephew of *Siratik*; then to ſpring from their retreat, and ſpreading themſelves on the plain, fall upon the rear of the enemy engaged with my father. Finally, he reſerved himſelf, with a deſign to fly to every part where his preſence ſhould be neceſſary.

The remainder of the day he employed in repeating the manœuvres to the army, and inſtructing each diviſion in its particular duty, that all might be executed without confuſion. He judged this precaution neceſſary, with negroes accuſtomed

accuſtomed to combat in diſorder, and ignorant of theſe evolutions which, amongſt poliſhed nations, decide the fate of engagements.

In the afternoon of the following day, we diſcovered the van of the enemy, and about an hour after the whole army appeared. Aſtoniſhed to ſee us, whom they did not ſuſpect ſo near, they halted; then ſpread themſelves on the plain, ſo as exactly to face the front, which we preſented between the foſſe and the wood; without extending beyond, either to the right or left. Soon we ſaw their fires kindled, and we concluded they would not attack us that day.

Dumont knew that the negroes rarely engage during the obſcurity of night; yet his prudence did not permit him to rely

rely on cuſtoms which might be violated. He viſited all the advanced poſts, while the army ſlept in ſecurity.

At the break of day we were all in arms; and we perceived, by the noiſe and movements of the enemy, that they prepared to attack us. *Dumont* ran through the ranks, and beſought the troops to act without precipitation; and promiſed them certain victory, if they executed the orders they had received.

He then took my father, *Otourou*, and I apart. My friends, ſaid he, we are on the point of engaging; we ſhall conquer, do not fear it. God is ever on the ſide of juſtice. Confide in him: be tranquil. This ſacrifice of your lives, which you offer to your country, cannot but pleaſe him. We

embraced.

embraced. A few moments we were ſilent. We wept. *Dumont* reſumed: Let us part, each to his duty. Joy! cried he; tears are not deſigned for a day of victory.

Filial piety had marked my place by the ſide of my father. Friendſhip, that of *Otourou* by my ſide.

Europeans will not find in the detail of this battle any of that dreadful pomp to which they have been accuſtomed in ſuch recitals. No horrid machinery which vomits forth thundering death. No murdering globes which in their ſwift flight ſpread wide carnage and diſmay. No reſplendent arms to illuminate the air; nor martial muſic, whoſe meaſured ſound regulates the ſoldier's ardour. But the terrifying ſhock of fierce multitudes, tumult, confuſion, cries,

cries, courage without order, and dexterity without aim : theſe are the circumſtances of an engagement among negroes. Arrows, wooden ſabres, and branches torn from the foreſt trees, are the weapons which warlike fury places in their hands. Yet here bravery is diſplayed entire; unmixed with that timid weakneſs, which ſecretly rejoices in the diſtance that the uſe of fire-arms has placed between the armies of Europe.

The enemy were in motion. At a certain diſtance they diſcharged their arrows, and inſtantly they ruſhed to the combat with frightful cries. The firſt aſſault was terrible. The ſpot on which we fought, with my father, was ſomewhat raiſed above the reſt. The ſituation gave greater weight to our exertions, ſo that during half an hour we gained

gained conſiderable ground upon our enemies. I began to fear that this would diſconcert the men hid in the foſſe, by the circuit they would be obliged to make, to execute the manœuvre with which they were charged. I made the obſervation to my father. He ſaid, I know it, but I have my reaſons; preſs forward. In a ſhort time I was convinced that he had foreſeen events better than myſelf. The nephew of *Siratik*, who was on our right, having retreated according to his orders, the negroes oppoſed to him puſhed the purſuit (as *Dumont* had foreſeen) with ſhouts of victory which reached to us. Knowing the cauſe, they gave us no uneaſineſs, but they increaſed the courage of our opponents to temerity. We found ourſelves obliged to fall back in our turn; and ſo loſe the ground we had gained. By

that,

that, I felt that my father had taken the ſureſt means of maintaining the ſituation which *Dumont* had conjured him not to loſe.

My father now commanded me to ſee what paſſed on the right; not daring himſelf to leave his troops, whoſe loſs was already conſiderable, and who betrayed ſymptoms of flight. I mounted on a little hill which we had in our rear. I ſaw that the ſix thouſand men had ruſhed from their retreat upon the purſuers of the nephew of *Siratik*; and that already the ten thouſand approached the rear of thoſe who were engaged with us. I ſprang into the air, and and cried victory. Our men heard me. They gave a ſhout of joy; the ten thouſand anſwered them. Diſorder ran through the enemy's troops. Preſſed on all ſides, they thought of nothing but

but flight; and the carnage became dreadful.

The ardour of the purſuit had hurried me more than half a league from the place where we fought. I thought myſelf followed by my friends. At length, covered with blood, and waſted with fatigue, I ſtood ſtill. I looked around me. I ſaw neither my father, nor *Otourou*, nor one of my countrymen. Some bodies of the enemy, whom I had paſſed in my courſe, overtook me; ſtill in their flight. My apprehenſive eye, my embarraſſed air, diſcovered me. They ſurrounded me, dragged me along with them, and I ſaw myſelf in the chains of thoſe whom my nation, whom even my own arms, had conquered.

So rapid was my misfortune, that I had ſcarcely time to view all the horror of

of it. I knew not all my danger till, arrived at the enemy's camp, I found myſelf the object of indignities, offered by a multitude rendered furious by their defeat. Inſtantly would they have put me to death, had I not been the right of *Damel* as a priſoner of war, and had they not feared a ſevere chaſtiſement for their zeal. During twenty-four hours I was covered with chains, expoſed to a thouſand inſults, ſinking beneath thirſt, hunger, and wearineſs. Abandoned without ſuccour, and without pity, to inhuman guards, will it be believed that theſe frightful ills were the leaſt of my care? My true torment lay deep in my heart. I recollected the laws of war among us; I knew that an eternal ſlavery awaited the priſoners taken in battle. I ſaw myſelf ſeparated from my father, from *Ctourou*, and *Amelia*. "Separated from *Amelia!* Oh, God! and can I ſupport

ſupport the thought without dying?" Alas! I have too often experienced that truth.

Our enemies now thought only of returning into their country; and I was conducted to the city which *Damel* inhabited, at the diſtance of fifty leagues. It was ſituated on that part of the ſea-coaſt where the European veſſels, attracted by commerce, frequently anchor. I cannot deſcribe what I ſuffered during this march. Pardon me, God of the Chriſtians! I curſed *Dumont* for having made thee known to me. I regretted our impotent Divinities, who would have granted death to my prayers. Thou didſt hold my hand. I felt it; but without gratitude. Pardon, my God! the weakneſs which could not yet ſupport misfortune.

At

At length we arrived, and they preſented me to *Damel*. He was young. During youth, man is more feeling. My height, my air, my figure ſtruck him. Who art thou? ſaid he. The ſon of the general who has vanquiſhed thee, cried I, fiercely. He regarded me with ſurprize. After a moment's ſilence he ſaid, Fortune treats thee wantonly. Yeſterday, my conqueror; to-day, my ſlave! Her injuſtice is cruel. I will indemnify thee. Thou canſt not render me all that I have loſt, anſwered I. I render thee much, ſaid he; I render thee a hope thou couldſt no longer poſſeſs. Then addreſſing himſelf to his guards, releaſe him, ſaid he, from his irons. Yet guard him; attend him with zeal; and be careful that no ſtranger ſees him without my command.

I was

I was conducted to a country-houſe belonging to *Damel*, about a quarter of a league from the city. It was built on an eminence, ſhaded by a foreſt of citrons and of palms; and commanding a proſpect which extended to the ſea over rich vallies watered by the river. Enchanting as the ſight was, it could not abate the affliction of my ſoul. Whatever charms were ſpread around this abode, to me it was a mere priſon, in which I believed myſelf condemned to groan through the remainder of my life; far from the objects of my tendereſt attachments. I turned my eyes, without ceaſing, to the ſide on which I figured my country. From the moment of my captivity a ſingle tear had not fallen upon my cheek. My heart ſeemed bound as with cords. A dreadful weight ſeemed to preſs upon my breaſt. No words paſſed my mouth,

mouth; and my days dragged on in fierce deſpair.

Save the vigilance with which they guarded me, I had no reaſon to complain of my ſlavery. I was even treated with a kind of regard which approached reſpect. I felt that I was obliged for this to my father's rank at the court of *Siratik*; and perceived that *Damel*, reduced by his loſs to deſire peace, hoped to obtain it more eaſily by his attentions to me. But though I had dived into this policy, ſtill I could not preſume that my liberty would be made by *Damel* the bond of peace. The thing was without example. I too well knew that the chief riches of our princes conſiſted in the number of their ſlaves; and I was far from ſuppoſing that *Damel* would infringe a law ſo favourable to the avarice

rice of the ſovereign. It was, however, on my liberty that he founded his hopes; and while, unknown to me, every thing was preparing to lead to the inſtant ſo dear to my wiſhes, I did every thing on my part to plunge myſelf into an eternal ſlavery.

There exiſts indeed in the heart of man an inquietude which almoſt involutarily makes him act contrary to prudence, and in oppoſition to his own intereſts. It appears to him that his future fate depends on himſelf alone. He makes no account of the aid of his friends, nor the fortuitous concourſe of circumſtances, nor the attentive eye of Providence. His mind attaches itſelf to one object. He purſues it with ardour, he relies on his own powers to attain it, and his precipitation too frequently renders abortive the deſires which ſurrounding circumſtances had prepared to crown.

It was this ſecret inquietude, this deſire of anticipating the effects of time, this blindneſs of making events depend on my own exertions, which hurried me forward. I accumulated on my own head the evils which I wiſhed to ſhun; and threw myſelf into the arms of misfortune to be freed from the torments of a future period, which probably would have conducted me to happineſs.

I had been five days in the houſe of *Damel*, and ſleep had not yet weighed down my eye-lids. Scarcely had the firſt rays of the morning ſhot acroſs the horizon when I betook myſelf to an elevated ſpot of ground, from whence I imagined I could ſee my country ſpight of the obſtacles which intervened. This I have ſaid was my whole occupation; my ſingle ſolace: fatal ſolace!

ſolace! It envenomed ſtill more the ſhaft by which I was torn. He only who has ſuffered, can conceive the ſpecies of conſolation the unfortunate find in converſing with their griefs.

One morning I placed myſelf as uſual on the terrace, and involuntarily turned my eyes toward the ſea. A veſſel appeared. The majeſty of her courſe upon the peaceful waves, the multiplicity of her ſails which the riſing ſun gilded with his fires, the height of her maſts which proudly ſprang into the air, (all ſo new to me) ſuſpended my wretchedneſs, and fixed my eyes upon this ſingle object. How great are the Europeans! cried I. Who to extend the happineſs of the human race have ſubdued this proud element to their empire!

I ſaw this veſſel anchor at the entrance of the river, not far from the city. She diſplayed a large white flag, floating in the air. I recognized, by this ſign, the countrymen of *Dumont*. He had told me an hundred times this ſtandard was the diſtinguiſhing mark of his nation. The ſight recalled the happy hours which I had paſſed with the man who was ſo dear to me. Tears bathed my face. My heart, ſo long oppreſſed, expanded itſelf. I wept abundantly; and by this bleſſing of nature perhaps ſaved a life which might have yielded to the weight of concentred grief.

In effect, I found myſelf more tranquil. Reaſon returned. I began to regard every thing around me: the deſire of making my eſcape was the reſult of all my reflections.

The

The execution of it was not eaſy. Even though I ſhould be able to elude the vigilance of my guards, how ſhould I traverſe an unknown land without being diſcovered? How ſhould I find the road which led to my country? Would it not be prudent for me to wait for more favourable occaſions? By degrees the miſtruſt of my guards would be weakened. I ſhould be leſs obſerved. I might acquire a more exact knowledge of the country; and execute with ſucceſs that which now appeared impoſſible.

Thus ſpoke prudence to me; but love and youth did not reaſon thus. The leaſt delay appeared an injury to my paſſion. To heſitate, when the queſtion was to rejoin *Amelia*, ſeemed an infidelity. She will believe, ſaid I, that fear is ſuperior to love; that my

life is nearer to me than my affection. No, my dear *Amelia!* no!. You ſhall never reproach your lover with having ſacrificed to his ſafety, the happy inſtant which may haſten the delight of returning to you.

Such were the emotions which agitated me, when new hopes darted into my mind. Why, cried I, ſhould I go ſo far in ſearch of that which Providence has brought within my reach? Yes, it is Providence which for me has conducted this French veſſel into the port. Theſe are the friends of *Dumont*. They adore the ſame God! Like him, without doubt, they demand virtues of the Supreme Being. They muſt poſſeſs pity. They do poſſeſs it. I will not doubt. I will recount my love and my misfortunes. They will be touched with them. There are people, friends

of

of ours, on this coaſt; they will land me among thoſe people. I ſhall again ſee *Amelia*. Yes, it is Heaven which enlightens me. Heaven points out the hand which muſt ſave me.

Suddenly my reſolution was irrevocably taken; and my mind was entirely occupied in the means of executing it. The return of hope had nearly reſtored my uſual gaiety; my guards perceived it, and congratulated me on the change. They were far from penetrating the cauſe. From that day I began to join in their dances and pleaſures. They ſaw it with joy. They believed my chagrin had ceaſed, and I perceived that they were leſs watchful of me. In Europe ſo ſudden a change had created ſuſpicion; but not ſo among negroes. Happy enough never to have need of diſſimulation, they judge of the ſenti-

ments of the ſoul by the exterior of the man.

I felt all the advantage I might draw from the conduct I now purſued, and I reſolved to purſue it till the negroes who ſurrounded me ſhould be lulled into perfect ſecurity. During the day, I laboured with them in *Damel*'s gardens; in the evening, I mingled my voice in their ſongs; at night, I affected, when I ſlept not, the profound ſleep of a man exempt from all care. They thought me reconciled to ſlavery. Many of thoſe who till now had ſlept in my chamber abſented themſelves to viſit their families. In a ſhort time, I ſaw myſelf almoſt as free as I ſhould have been in my own country: and in truth, but for my fatal impatience, I approached that liberty ſo neceſſary to my being. But it was reſerved

ſerved for me not to learn the happineſs which awaited me, till I had bitterly expiated my deſtructive imprudence.

Time advanced. I reſolved no longer to delay my departure; and I choſe the approaching night for the execution of my project. All my guards were abſent except one; who remained more to amuſe, than to guard me. We ſupped together. Nothing had been refuſed me which could render my life pleaſant; and the food, eſteemed moſt delicate by us, was laviſhed on my table. The fondneſs of negroes for palm wine is known, and I had no difficulty in making my guard drink of it to exceſs. Soon the liquor plunged him into a heavy ſleep. It might be midnight when I left the houſe. There was no moon; but the weather was

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mild; and the ſtars, much more luminous in our regions than in Europe, ſhed a ſufficient light to enable me to diſtinguiſh objects. I eaſily ſcaled the encloſure of the gardens. I ſwiftly ran down the hill, and was ſoon on the ſhore of the ſea.

I judged, as accurately as the obſcurity of the night would permit, that the veſſel lay at the diſtance of nearly a quarter of a league. I knew my own powers; the ſpace gave me no uneaſineſs. I was about to plunge into the waves. I know not what ſtaid me. An involuntary dread ſeized upon me. I thought a voice cried, Whither doſt thou go? I liſtened. Silence reigned around me. I recognized that my imagination alone had been ſtrucken. I haſtily accuſed myſelf of puſilanimity. I aſcribed the ſpecies of terror which had

had ſeized me to the inquietude inſeparable from a nocturnal flight, and the effervescence of my mind agitated by a rapid courſe. *Amelia* then approached my imagination. What doſt thou? ſaid ſhe. A moment's delay may ſeparate thee for ever from *Amelia*. "It is done! let us be gone." I ſprang into the vaſt deep; my arms divide the mounting waves, and already is the ſhore far from me.

I was near an hour in reaching the veſſel; I had ill judged the diſtance. When I approached her, the centinel cried out, *Who is there? A friend*, I anſwered in French. The extraordinary circumſtance of hearing me ſpeak a language ſo unuſual to theſe climates, the manner in which I came, the time I had choſen, excited the curioſity of the ſailors who were on deck. They

crowded to the ſide where I was, they threw a rope to me; I ſeized it and mounted. Inſtantly I ſaw myſelf ſurrounded by a number of marines, who conducted me to the officer on duty. Who are you? Whence do you come? ſaid he, with a coarſe voice. A moment's patience! I anſwered; let me recover my breath. I was worn out. I ſat me down. I would drink, ſaid I to him; I feel my heart ſinks. He ordered ſome brandy to be given me. This ſtrong liquor, which till then I had never taſted, quickly reſtored me. I aroſe, and they conducted me into the cabin. There was ſome light in it. If what I have ſaid concerning my perſon be recollected, the aſtoniſhment will be expected with which they conſidered me. By G—d, cried the officer with ſufficient energy, this is the fineſt negro I have ever ſeen. The

captain

captain is happy. Fortune comes to him unſought. I had no comprehenſion of the ſenſe of his words; but I learned from them, that he who ſpoke was not the commander of the ſhip. Where is the captain? ſaid I. My buſineſs is with him. They had already informed him of what paſſed, and he ſoon appeared. I eaſily diſtinguiſhed him by the air of reſpect which his preſence inſpired. His name was *Urban*.

This man has had too much concern in the events of my life, to ſuffer me to proceed without deſcribing him. I beheld a man of about forty, rather meagre, but with limbs and muſcles which announced ſtrength. His complexion was ſwarthy; his black hair encroached upon his forehead, acroſs which a deep wound, from the ſtroke of a ſabre, had left an indelible mark. Spreading eye-

eye-brows ſhaded his ſmall piercing eyes. His noſe was prominent; his mouth large; his lips thin; and his teeth blackened with tobacco. He had a broad cheſt, and his ſhoulders ſtood uncommonly high: a certain harſhneſs of muſcles gave a ſerious air to his countenance, which approached ſeverity. Yet the whole of his figure was rather good than otherwiſe; and even his phyſiognomy did not want grace when he yielded to gaiety; but was diſguſting when animated by the paſſions which maſtered his ſoul. I do not paint his character; his actions will excuſe me.

Let us be left without witneſs, ſaid I to him; what I have to communicate requires ſecrecy. He made a ſign to his people, and they withdrew. You ſee, ſaid I, an unfortunate being who caſts

caſts himſelf on your humanity. I have been educated by a Frenchman. If I have ſome virtues, it is to him, and to his God, whom he has made known to me, that I owe them. Inſtructed in the ſame principles as he, you muſt have a feeling heart. Behold my title to your compaſſion. While I explain the motives of my confidence, I do but recal to your mind virtues which muſt be dear to you.

A ruſtling which I heard in the corner of the room interrupted me. Continue without fear, ſaid the captain. It is my ſon, and I have no ſecrets with him. The light was ſo feeble, that I had not remarked a hammock in a corner of the cabin, in which the young man lay. It was you, my dear *Ferdinand!* the beſt of friends! Heaven had placed you there. You were ſent to conſole me in the abyſs in which I was about to plunge myſelf.

On the obſervation of the captain, I continued. I ſpoke of my infancy; of my father's rank at the court of *Siratik*; of the adventures of *Dumont*, and the care which he had taken of my education. I painted to him the force of my paſſion for *Amelia*; our war; my captivity with *Damel*; my flight to the ſhip; and I finiſhed by pointing out the ſervices I expected from him. Scarcely could I finiſh before he ſaid, with ſuch earneſtneſs as expreſſed great inquietude, Are you certain that every perſon on ſhore is ignorant of your retreat? I am certain of it, anſwered I. There remains no trace even by which they can be led to ſuſpect me. So much the better, replied he, with extreme delight; I ſhould have been compelled to have returned you. This is an article of our treaty of commerce, and God knows if I wiſh to loſe you. Be compoſed; you could not have made a more

more fortunate application. We ſail in two days; till then, avoid being ſeen by the negroes who come daily on board. No ſtranger dares to enter this cabin without my permiſſion. Do not leave it; you ſhall want for nothing. I will ſee you often. My ſon is of your age, and he ſhall be your companion.

He then opened the door of the apartment, and called his mate to him. You ſee this negro, ſaid he. Inform the ſailors, that if any one of them thinks proper to ſpeak of his being here, I will hang him on the main yard. Very well, ſir, anſwered the mate, and he went to execute his orders.

The day began to appear. The captain called up his ſon, and ſent him to order ſome breakfaſt. The young man returned

returned with attendants, who brought bread, ham, and wine. Theſe, though new to my taſte, were pleaſing after ſuch a night as I had paſſed: but nothing gave me ſuch pleaſure as the ſight of *Ferdinand*. Tall and finely formed, he poſſeſſed alſo an ingenuous countenance, which ever attaches the heart in the firſt inſtance. I could not reſiſt it. I tendered my hand with that frankneſs of nature which a commerce with civilized people had not corrupted. Sit down beſide me, ſaid I to him. With that noble viſage, you muſt have an elevated ſoul. I am your friend. His friend! ſaid the father. You do not know him! It is true, anſwered I, my eyes have never ſeen him before; but my heart loves him. Do you recollect that he is a white man? ſaid the captain. How does colour concern virtue? returned I. It is virtue I love, and

and not the colour. Indeed I believe, ſaid *Ferdinand* ſighing, that all men are brethren, and that we ſhould love them all. 'Sdeath! ſaid the captain angrily, ſhall I never make any thing of you? Muſt I bring a philoſopher into the world? The eyes of *Ferdinand* ſunk to the ground, and he made no reply. I was ſilent. The end of this diſcourſe ſeemed an unknown language to me. The term of philoſopher was totally new. Never had I heard it pronounced by *Dumont*. I have ſince diſcovered that, without ſpeaking to me of philoſophy, he had taught me what it was; and that the Europeans often pronounce the word without knowing its purport.

When we had finiſhed breakfaſt, the captain cauſed a ſailor to bring a hammock for me: and ſaid, you need reſt, lie

lie down, I am going on ſhore. He then ſaid to his ſon, you will take care of his dinner; but do not let him leave this room. On your life, added he with a dark frown, ſuffer no one to ſee him. He quitted us.

Blind as I was, I ſaw in this care, nothing but a concern for my welfare. I was even pleaſed with the bluntneſs of his manner. The vague promiſe he had given me, which I conſidered as leading infallibly to my wiſhes, the joy of ſeeing myſelf ſurrounded with the countrymen of *Dumont*, had ſpread a calm over my ſoul. Alas! ſaid I to *Ferdinand*, that you cannot proceed with me to my country, when your father ſhall land me on the coaſt of our allies! What pleaſure ſhould I have to ſee the ſon of my deliverer folded in the arms of all my friends! How would my

my father, *Dumont*, *Otourou*, love you! and my *Amelia!* She has no brother. You ſhall be her brother. No, you ſhall be ſtill nearer to her; you ſhall be the friend of her lover. Your father cannot quit his veſſel; but you, *Ferdinand*, they can ſpare you with me. We will return you in another voyage; for I do not intend that you ſhall quit him for ever. I too well know the anguiſh of being ſeparated from a father. *Ferdinand* had taken my hand. He was ſilent, and his eyes were fixed upon mine. I thought I ſaw tears in them. "My propoſition afflicts you. Ah! I ſee how it is! you have alſo an *Amelia*, who expects you, and it is juſt that ſhe be preferred to a ſtranger." No, ſaid he, no, my dear—What is your name? "*Itanoko.*" "Well, *Itanoko*; no, your gratitude does not afflict me. My grief has another cauſe.

Do

Do not aſk me. I cannot anſwer you. But do believe that I would ſhed my blood to be a witneſs of your return to your friends." I do not demand your ſecrets, replied I, I have done nothing for you; but you are entitled to mine, and you know them. Alas! you owe me nothing, ſaid *Ferdinand*. It is not I who am your—your protector. No, it is your father, anſwered I; and is not that the ſame thing? With us the father and the children have but one will. *Ferdinand* interrupted me. " Come, take ſome repoſe, you have need of it. My duty calls me elſewhere." He left me alone. I thought myſelf on the eve of happineſs; and full of this ſweet idea, abandoned myſelf to ſleep.

Horrible ſleep! thou who didſt conceal my butchers from my vengeance! Ah, why didſt thou not change thy ſoothing

ſoothing poppies into the cold ice of death! Then ſhould I have deſcended into the tomb, without ſuſpecting the perfidy of men!

If I had ſtrength to ſurvive the horrors which attended my waking, if my ſoul could then withſtand the torments that ſurrounded me, ſhall I yet find courage to diſplay the ſcene? Yes: I owe it to humanity, which has vainly wept away two hundred years over the negroes maſſacred by avarice; I owe it to Europe, which never was the accomplice of barbarities practiſed upon us in a corner of the world; I owe it to philoſophy, who has at all times contended with the paſſions to which we have been immolated, and whoſe victory may perhaps be forwarded by this recital of crimes committed by her contemptible adverſaries.

Alas!

Alas! while they were heaping outrages upon me, the ſweet error of a dream had conducted me to *Amelia*. I thought I held the hand of *Urban*. I preſented him to my father, to *Dumont*, to all my friends, by the name of my deliverer. I ſaw them preſs him to their boſoms, inundated with tears. I found myſelf reſtored to love, to nature, to my country; reſtored by him, and I called for bleſſings on his head. I awakened. Oh heavens! a frightful obſcurity encloſed me. I attempted to riſe. My arms and feet were benumbed with heavy chains. I cried with a faint voice, Where am I? Some words, which I received through the confuſed murmuring of ſighs, groans, and ſobs, confounded with piercing ſhrieks, and the harſh ſound of irons, taught me that I was in the midſt of negroes. Soon I heard the terrible name of ſlavery

ſpread

ſpread throughout the black cavity of the veſſel. "Slavery! Fury! who has made me a ſlave!" The money of thy butchers, anſwered a voice. "Their money! Never have I coſt them any(4)". "So much the better for thee. Thou ſhalt not be devoured by the inſulting pity of their avarice." Oh, my father, cried I; Oh, my *Amelia!* Thou ſhalt never ſee them more, replied the voice. Immenſe ſeas will ſeparate thee from them. Fetters, wounds, inceſſant labour, death! Theſe are what await thee! I ceaſed to hear. I felt my limbs ſtiffen; my blood became torpid, and my ſenſes forſook me.

I know not how long I remained inſenſible. They had placed me on the deck. *Ferdinand* and the ſurgeon ſtood beſide me. I began to recover; but it was long before I diſtinguiſhed any

thing. The firſt object that ſtruck me was the ſon of *Urban*. My feet were ſtill in chains, but my hands were free; and *Ferdinand* held them between his, bathing them with his tears. I withdrew them with a ſort of indignation. This action penetrated to his heart. He extended his arms toward heaven, and retired without ſpeaking to me.

The aſſiſtance of the ſurgeon had reſtored ſuch ſtrength to me, that I could now conſider what paſſed around me, and I fully ſaw the dreadful objects which the obſcurity of the hold had partly hid from my ſight. Some hundreds of negroes were ſpread upon the deck, all of whom had their feet in irons. Their hands were diſengaged, becauſe it was the hour in which their miſerable nouriſhment was diſtributed to them. There, did I ſee grief expreſs itſelf

itſelf in all its varied forms. Some deluged the planks with their tears. Others fiercely demanded vengeance from heaven: and others, with motionleſs eyes, looked towards their native land which they could no longer perceive. On one ſide, a huſband ſuſtained his fainting wife, whoſe weeping infant in vain ſucked the breaſts which were dried up with ſufferings. On another, a ſon, driven to raging madneſs, tore out his teeth with gnawing the chains which cruſhed his father's limbs. Around us were planted armed murderers, with ſmiles on their lips, and audacity on their fronts. Yet the veſſel lightly bounded on the tranquil ſurface of the ſea, and the heavens were without a cloud! Ah! it was mercy which withheld the thunder and the ſtorm!

Nothing was wanting to complete this ſcene, but an inſtance of that

dumb ferocity, that laſt courage of deſpair, of which man is capable, when his ſoul has become ſteeled beneath the torments of injuſtice. A female negro gave us this example. She was pregnant, and the pains of labour ſeized her. By a geſture, ſhe gave an intimation of it to our guards. They removed her from the crowd, and placed her on a ſail in the after part of the veſſel. Without uttering a ſingle cry, without a moan, without ſhedding a tear, ſhe delivered herſelf. Scarcely did ſhe perceive her infant when ſhe ſeized it; gazed on it with a fierce eye; looked around her; ſaw herſelf little obſerved; crawled to the edge of the ſhip; gave her ſon the firſt and laſt kiſs; and precipitated herſelf with him into the waves.

Then the alarms of diſappointed avarice took the place of humanity.

Urban

Urban ſwore, ſtormed, threatened the guards. They ſlackened ſail. Some ſailors threw themſelves into the ſea. Uſeleſs efforts. The irons of the poor negro woman had plunged her beyond their reach. They took up the infant; but it was dead.

I ſaw all this with a hardened indifference. A rapid paſſage, from the gentleſt hope to the depth of wretchedneſs, had ſtupified my ſoul. My mind verged to imbecility. Many times during the day did *Ferdinand* approach me. As often did he ſpeak to me. I heard him; I ſaw him; but without recollecting him. My heart was entirely ſhut up; and the ſenſes no longer conveyed any intelligence to it.

When night came, they drove my unhappy companions into the hold. The precautions which they obſerved,

fully proved the miſtruſt of theſe white people. They unchained but one negro at a time. They forced him to deſcend, and the ſailors who were below replaced his fetters on him (5). The ſituation alone of theſe poor people was ſufficient to drive them to deſpair. Three feet in breadth was allotted to two negroes, and ſcarcely was there room left them in length to extend their bodies. In the courſe of the voyage, I have heard *Urban* boaſt of his cruel management and the richneſs of his cargo. Alas! without me; me, whom the barbarian had ſo unworthily treated, dearly had he paid for this knowledge, of which he made ſuch inſolent vaunts.

I expected to be compelled to deſcend with the others. I ſaw the infernal place ſhut up, and they did not think

think of me. *Ferdinand* came; he knelt to remove the chains which were on my feet, and availed himſelf of that poſition to ſpeak to me, without being remarked. If you were in a ſituation to hear me, ſaid he, I would whiſper hope to you. While I live, at leaſt, you ſhall have a defender: but in the name of God, forbear to reproach my father; do not irritate him. I anſwered not a word. I could not ſpeak. If I had poſſeſſed that power, reſentment alone would have furniſhed my expreſſions. But, as then no one was near us, he ſeized my irons, and threw them into the ſea with ſuch indignation, that this action, which did not eſcape me, inſtantly diſarmed me. I took his hand and preſſed it to my heart. He underſtood my language, and anſwered it with ſobs. At that inſtant a bell ſounded. He preſſed me to riſe. It

was impoſſible. He called a ſailor to aid him. They ſuſtained me in their arms, and conducted me to the fore part of the veſſel. *Ferdinand* placed me on a bench, and prayers commenced; for it was prayers which this bell announced.

Dumont had rendered this act too familiar to ſuffer me to be miſtaken in the cauſe which aſſembled the crew. *Urban* himſelf read the prayers, and the ſailors joined in the reſponſes. This ſight effectually drew me from the ſpecies of lethargy into which I was plunged. My mind was rouſed. I felt it revolt at this ſcene. What! cried I, the monſter pray! Ah! what can he demand of that God who knows all hearts?

When prayers were finiſhed, *Ferdinand* led me into the apartment where his

his father and the officers were placing themſelves at table. I ſuffered myſelf to be conducted involuntarily. It ſeemed that my will was extinct. I was an automaton to which we give motion, and which returns to reſt the moment we ceaſe to act upon it. Yet I did not endure leſs. A devouring heat conſumed my entrails. My ideas were diſordered. It was impoſſible for me to give any conſiſtency to them. I perfectly felt that a frightful misfortune had befallen me; but I could give no account of it. Like a man tormented with a painful dream, who, though inſenſible, feels that his dream is the effect of ſleep, and ſtruggles againſt it, without being able to diſengage himſelf.

Well, how is it? ſaid *Urban* to me, as ſoon as he ſaw me. You are ſorrow-

ful; you have more reaſon to rejoice. You are not, like others, ſuffocated in the hold. Faith! but for *Ferdinand* you ſhould have enjoyed it at your leiſure. I muſt ever be made the humble ſervant of his will. Does he wiſh for any thing? he weeps. 'Sdeath! I would rather engage an hundred corſairs than one weeping man. Come, come, eat and drink! cheer up! do not think of dying; that will never do for me. This curſed negro wench has robbed me already to-day of an hundred piſtoles, by drowning herſelf. Why, I do you a ſervice by making you a traveller. You would never have been more than a uſeleſs negro in your own country. We ſhall make ſomething of you at leaſt in America.

I gave no anſwer to this diſcourſe, but by a look of diſdain. *Ferdinand* roſe

roſe from the table and offered me ſome food. I thanked him by an inclination of my head. It was impoſſible for me to eat. When the repaſt was concluded, the ſurgeon approached me. He felt my pulſe and declared to *Urban* that a burning fever had ſeized me, and that prompt aſſiſtance muſt be adminiſtered if he would ſave my life. Immediately a bed was made up for me in the gun-room, and I was removed into it by the aid of *Ferdinand*.

Urban became truly alarmed for my ſafety. In the moment that he firſt ſaw me he conceived the odious project which he had ſo cruelly executed. Yet, at firſt, he flattered himſelf he ſhould have ſome days to prepare me for my fate by an appearance of kindneſs, and he imagined that the evil thus gradually introduced would be leſs ſenſibly

felt by me. My fine figure ſtruck him, and whether he ſhould keep me for his own ſervice, or ſell me to ſome American planter, or preſent me to ſome powerful lord, he propoſed to make conſiderable advantage of me. When he quitted me on the morning following the fatal night on which I fled to his ſhip, he went on ſhore as he had ſaid. He found the whole city informed of my flight: *Damel*, whoſe hopes were thus deſtroyed, obtaining no tidings from the people whom he had ſent every where to ſeek me, had ſuſpected the truth. He cauſed all the captains of the ſhips which were in the road to be aſſembled, and declared his deſign of examining their ſhips. *Urban* feigned ſubmiſſion as well as the others, but inſtantly formed his reſolution. His cargo was complete. As he was on

on the point of ſailing, all his people were on board. The future was of no conſequence to him. Abounding with riches, this he deſigned to be his laſt voyage. He returned then to his veſſel. The winds were favourable. He weighed anchor, ſet ſail, and ſtretched out to ſea. His abrupt departure had changed the ſuſpicions of *Damel* into certainty. *Urban* ſaw a number of canoes purſue him. If unfortunately for him the wind had changed or ſlackened, the canoes would have reached him, the negroes would have made the ſearch, and their violence to recover me from his hands would not have been without danger in a veſſel filled with ſlaves, ſome of whom at leaſt he muſt have releaſed from their fetters to reinforce his own crew. He ſaw the peril of his ſituation, and was thence led to confound me with the reſt,

reſt, hoping that the obſcurity of the hold, and the multitude, would more effectually conceal me. My fatigue, the tranquillity which I had loſt from the day of the battle, and which I had then recovered at leaſt in a dream, had plunged me into ſuch profound ſleep that I had been ſenſible of nothing that had paſſed. I had ſlept near twenty-four hours. My ſwoon had ſpeedily ſucceeded my ſleep. The veſſel had all this time made a rapid courſe. We were entirely out of ſight not only of the canoes but of the land. The apprehenſions of *Urban* had ceaſed, and his ſon had no difficulty in obtaining the indulgencies which we have ſeen.

Notwithſtanding the care of the ſurgeon I was more than five days lingering between life and death. *Urban* neglected

neglected nothing to ſave me, and if he had been actuated by a nobler motive I ſhould have celebrated his attentions with gratitude. But it was his avarice which made every effort to cloſe that tomb, which his baſe perfidy had opened for *Itanoko*.

Yet it was to my dear *Ferdinand* that I owed my life. Without dread I ſaw death advance toward me; except that, when I thought of *Ferdinand* his approach appeared terrible. His tears much more than his own diſcourſe vanquiſhed the indifference which I had for my health. The condition in which I ſometimes ſaw him, penetrated me. At length I ſaid to him, I ſee you wiſh me to live. Muſt I then be miſerable to make you happy? Ah live! anſwered he, for my ſake. Live to give me time to convince you that I have

not

not been acceſſary to the wrongs which you have endured. Alas! I was far from ſuch a ſuſpicion. Do not think, he would often ſay to me, that you will be for ever ſeparated from your friends. Time perhaps may lead my father to relent. Loaden with the gifts of fortune, the paſſion which at preſent blinds him may be extinguiſhed. But if he ſhould remain inflexible, according to the order of nature you will one day be delivered into my hands. In that moment you are free. Then, whatever it may coſt me to be ſeparated from you, I will reconduct you to your country. Till then, I feel I can no ways compenſate for the privation of a father, of a lover, of your friends. But at leaſt you ſhall ſee me by your ſide, you ſhall hear me ſpeak of them. I will anſwer you with my tears, and my tears will conſole you. How could

I reſiſt

I reſiſt ſuch tenderneſs? You triumph, *Ferdinand*, cried I. My death was the moſt terrible vengeance with which I could ſtrike your father. But I renounce it.

Till this time, they had been compelled to force medicines on me in the moments of my delirium, which I invariably refuſed as recollection returned to me. Subdued by *Ferdinand*, I permitted art to aid nature; and the ſurgeon ſoon pronounced me out of danger.

The ſhock had been too violent to ſuffer my convaleſcence to be entire. My ſoul was not healed. But my ſickneſs had at leaſt produced this effect, that by attacking the ſources of my life, it had blunted the ſubtle points of my misfortunes. My violent tranſports were

were ſucceeded by a profound melancholy that ſought for every thing on which it could feed. The names of *Amelia*, of my father, at firſt tore open all the folds of my heart: afterwards they poured in a delicious balm which impregnated this heart with joy.

This melancholy continued my weakneſs. I was out of danger, but I gained no ſtrength. *Ferdinand* perceived it. He did every thing he could to amuſe me. But it was not in the power of ſoothing thoughts to draw me from this inert ſituation. Some violent convulſion was neceſſary to drive my ſoul from that languor to which it abandoned itſelf with complacence.

Ferdinand ſcarcely ever quitted me; notwithſtanding the inconvenience of my apartment he took up his reſidence there.

there. Rather a volunteer on board than an officer, he had little duty to perform. His father was not offended with an affection which would have wounded his arrogance in any other circumſtances: whatever promiſed my preſervation was ſure to pleaſe him; and avarice exempted friendſhip from the reproaches of pride.

One night, *Ferdinand* having left me to ſup with his father, found me on his return much better. He ſolicited me to go the next day upon deck. Alas! ſaid I, you forget the ſpectacle which awaits me there. I muſt behold thoſe unfortunate negroes. I ſhudder with the bare idea. My dear *Itanoko*, replied *Ferdinand*, this ſight will ſoon preſent itſelf to you on ſhore. Nowhere can you ſhun it. I fear the advice I give you is cruel; yet you muſt

muſt accuſtom your eyes to ſupport this revolting object, ſince it will inceſſantly purſue you. " It is to counſel me to plant deep in my heart the hatred which I owe the Europeans."——" Alas! I cannot blame you with reſpect to ſome; but if the hatred is general it will be unjuſt. A very ſmall number of thoſe proſecute you; the remainder pity you; and the wiſeſt anticipate, by their wiſhes, the happy moment in which your chains will be deſtroyed."——" I do not comprehend. If they be the weaker part who oppreſs us, why do not the ſtronger oppoſe this oppreſſion which to them ſeems odious?"—— " Becauſe the paſſions are yet ſtronger than wiſdom. The love of gain alone animates your tyrants. By ſatisfying this vile paſſion they procure enjoyments even for thoſe who grieve for your fate; and they ſubtilly paint to them

them the loſs of thoſe enjoyments as inevitable when compaſſion ſhall take the lead. Such too often is man. He wiſhes to be virtuous; but if the practice of virtue requires ſacrifices from him, his will ſleeps and virtue is forgotten. Add to this, that the eyes which weep over your miſeries are far from the ſcene of them; that thoſe who are the cauſe of your injuries have a decided intereſt in ſhading from all eyes the exceſs of them; and that the commiſeration of Europe for your ſufferings does more honour to its humanity, becauſe they ſuſpect but the ſlighteſt part of them."

"In truth, continued *Ferdinand*, who are the witneſſes of your afflictions? They are firſt the navigators who ſail to your country to buy you; the leſs you coſt, the more they gain.

See the motive of the bad quality of that food which they give you; the inconvenience of your ſituation in the ſhip (6) has its ſource in the deſire of adding to the richneſs of the cargo; and the weight of your fetters ariſes from their fear. The next witneſſes of your miſeries are the planters, whoſe riches are eſtimated by the number of negroes which they poſſeſs. Hence, the perpetual labour they impoſe on you to indemnify them for the money which you coſt them; hence, the right which they imagine they have acquired by that price, to diſpoſe of your ſtrength, your time, your liberty, and even your life. They draw their reaſoning from a principal of natural law, that every one is at liberty to diſpoſe of what he has acquired at his pleaſure; but they forget that the conſequence is falſely deduced; becauſe, agreeable to the

ſame

ſame natural law, the liberty of man is an unalienable right which can neither be bought nor ſold. To theſe two deſcriptions of men, at once the authors and witneſſes of your wrongs, may be added the European traders who exchange their merchandiſe for the productions which are raiſed by your labour. You will conceive that an immenſe profit could alone engage them in ſuch a commerce, and that it is their intereſt carefully to preſerve the ſource of it. Judge if the truth is likely to pierce through ſuch a medium to Europe. Perhaps Europe would not yet have been intereſted in your fate, if leiſure, and a thirſt for knowledge had not led into our iſlands ſome philoſophic minds who ſaw and reported your wrongs."——" There is then among the Europeans a claſs of men ſo degraded as not to bluſh at the inhumanity

nity of their countrymen !"——" Ah! you do not know the eloquence of avarice. She borrows the voice and colours of fiction. Fiction gilds your chains; denies you almoſt every quality of men, to enoble the pretended charity of your deſpots towards you; ſwells the liſt of dangers which they encounter to procure you; exaggerates the cruelty which you exerciſe on the white people who fall into your hands, and the ſtupid inſenſibility of your ſovereigns who deliver you up for trifles which we deſpiſe. Thus, does ſhe ſeduce our monarchs (7) by inſinuating that this commerce aggrandizes their power; our great men, by multiplying the ſources of their enjoyments; our people, by infecting them with the errors which cloſe their credulous minds to pity; thus, does ſhe betray even religion itſelf; and, by ſhewing

ing ſome of you to her as objects of her dominion, compels her to conſecrate the injuries with which injuſtice overwhelms you."—"Weak as theſe reaſons are, at leaſt they are excuſes which falſehood may employ to palliate avarice; and I feel they may impoſe on people who enjoy the fruits of our ſlavery, without knowing the anguiſh which thoſe productions coſt us. But lying has no excuſe. I coſt your father nothing. I implored his humanity; nothing further. Was his character formed of unalloyed barbarity? he might have refuſed my requeſt; have ſent me back; and this ſhould have been ſufficient for his cruel propenſity. But chains! ſlavery! ſhame! Oh, *Ferdinand!* the lions of our foreſt tear us, we kill them; but if they are not impelled by hunger, they do not ſeize upon us for future wants."—"Alas! my

dear *Itanoko*, when long abuſe, when luxury has taken the place of virtues, there is no point to which man confines himſelf: he dares every thing; he excuſes every thing!"

"I will tell you a truth, *Ferdinand*; it may be harſh, but pardon me, I cannot diſſimulate. If riches, which offer the means of ſolacing human miſeries, have ſerved to harden your minds; if the ſciences, whoſe object is to enlighten men, have but increaſed your pride; if your compaſſionate religion has no influence on your hearts; you muſt be the moſt vile, the moſt corrupt of men! To poſſeſs all the treaſures which can give energy to virtue, and to turn them all into the means of vice! It is a degree of depravity of which the whole world beſide gives no example!"—"I have already ſaid,

Itanoko,

Itanoko, your denunciation muſt not be general. Believe me, the number of the virtuous amongſt us greatly exceeds the wicked."—" My negro, ſay your virtuous people, your bondage pains me; yet they ſuffer me to endure it; they do not avenge my wrongs: but they could do ſo, ſince they are more numerous than the wicked. At leaſt, then, this is weakneſs; and when the welfare of mankind is concerned, weakneſs is a crime."—" Ah! *Itanoko*, I am European!"—" I feel the reproach, my dear *Ferdinand!* I owe you every thing. I would give you my blood, my life. I deteſt theſe fetters with which your father galls me, and I bleſs the happy inſtant in which your goodneſs has made me your ſlave. I love, I reſpect your virtues. But ſhall I ſay it? Your virtues would have extended further, had you been educated among

us; a negro who ſhould have poſſeſſed ſo good a heart as yours, would have advertiſed you of the treachery of his father."—" Ah! this is the reproach which I dreaded from you."

It was late. I preſſed *Ferdinand* to take ſome repoſe. I could not; and when day came I had not cloſed my eyes. This want of ſleep, cauſed by the feelings which our converſation had excited, did me no injury. I found myſelf even better than I was the preceding evening; and, to pleaſe *Ferdinand*, I conſented to go upon deck. At firſt I could ſcarcely ſupport the brightneſs of day; the ſurgeon, who had foreſeen it, made me ſwallow ſome drops of elixir, which animated my ſpirits, and my eyes became inſenſibly accuſtomed to the light. *Urban* approached me with joy in his countenance.

nance. He complimented his ſon and the ſurgeon on the ſucceſs of their cares; and he offered me congratulations which too well expreſſed the ſentiment that inſpired them.

The hour arrived in which the negroes were to leave the hold. *Ferdinand* warned me of it. Courage! ſaid he. Theſe are men whom you are to behold. Alas! free or in ſlavery, weak or powerful, man offers every where the picture of miſery *.

They appeared, and ſoon their uſual proviſions were diſtributed to them. They were much waſted. But what was my ſurprize! I feared to ſee their tears; to hear their groans: I ſaw a certain air of ſerenity which almoſt ap-

* No: not the virtuous man. T.

proached to joy. My mind revolted at this apparent calm. What! ſaid I to myſelf, is their ſoul already become familiar with diſgrace? Do they no longer feel their fetters? Oh, negroes! if it is thus, you merit your fate! I thought the Europeans the moſt deſpicable of men! but you ſurpaſs them in baſeneſs. They are unjuſt: you are contemptible.

While this reflection oppreſſed me, one of thoſe negroes made me a ſign to approach him. *Urban*, who was near me, probably thinking that a ſingle word from them would advance my cure more than all his cares, preſſed me to join the man who called me. I obeyed. Are you there! ſaid he to me, in the negro language, and in a low voice. I thought you dead. Heaven has willed otherwiſe, anſwered I.—"So much the better."

ter."—"So much the worſe! I am not as you are; I cannot ſo ſpeedily reconcile myſelf to ſlavery and opprobrium."—"Why do you judge thus of us?"—"I ſee you content."—"Then are you more reconciled than we to our fate, ſince it has already made you forget the character of negroes."——"How!"—"No diſcuſſion: we have not time for that. Only anſwer me. "What think you of the captain?"—"He is a monſter!"—"And the white people?—"Barbarians!"—"What are your ſentiments for them?"—"Hatred!"—"Nothing more?"—"What more can an unarmed man?"—"Perhaps—But, does not honour call for more?"—"Without doubt, it calls for vengeance."—"And ſhall be ſatisfied: to-morrow, your tyrants ſhall be no more."—"How!"—"To-morrow, I tell you, they expire; and, to crown

all, they expire under our hands. Now blame our joy; or rather bluſh to be a negro, and to have miſunderſtood the feelings of negroes."

Pardon me, O God of the univerſe! pardon me! Inſtantly I became criminal. All the paſſages of my heart flew open to the ſerpents of vengeance. I forgot thy rights, thy juſtice. I ſaw only my own injuries, and the barbarous pleaſure of imbruing my hands in the blood of the perfidious authors of them.

Proceed: ſaid I to the negro. What hour? What ſignal? What means? One of us, ſaid he, poſſeſſes a herb which happily grows in our climates, and which deſtroys iron. The lightning is not ſwifter than its effects. To-morrow we divide it among our brethren, and

and apply it in this very place. Theſe Europeans will not perceive its operation. Our war ſong ſhall be the ſignal. Our fetters fall off. Suddenly we riſe. Theſe ſame fetters ſhall be our arms. Our tyrants, aſtoniſhed, will be vanquiſhed as ſoon as attacked; and ſhall periſh to the individual laſt of them. The ſea ſhall be their ſepulchre, and the theatre of our glory. This is our work, continued he. Theſe our chiefs, pointing to ſome of them. And this is my anſwer, ſaid I to him: Vengeance and liberty! It is enough, replied the negro. Leave me. Suſpicion may be awakened.

I advanced ſome ſteps, and pauſed. My joy will betray me, ſaid I to myſelf. Be calm, my mind. Imitate *Urban*. The traitor devoured me with a tranquil front. Let the barbarian be

the victim of the art which he has taught me!

Ferdinand remarked my agitation, and joined me. Why, said he, have you mingled with these negroes? Was not their sight sufficient to awaken your pangs? Why then did you enter into discourse with them? Leave them, *Itanoko*.

Detestable passion of revenge! Will it be imagined? I followed *Ferdinand* without remorse. I had just signed his death warrant; yet his sight roused no compassion in me.

I do not excuse myself; I wish only to be known entirely as I was. The effect of injustice is to render him barbarous who is the victim of it, and such I became. It seemed that all my forces had waited this signal to return to me.

A rapid

A rapid fire ſpread itſelf through my veins, and the impreſſion of my malady was inſtantaneouſly effaced. I contemplated my victims with cold cruelty; and ſilently calculated torments for them. I counted them, and was delighted with the number which promiſed to glut my vengeance. I haſtened, by my wiſhes, the moment in which I could practiſe their tortures. Then wiſhed to delay them ſtill longer, that I might dwell on the pleaſure of preparing them.

In the evening *Urban* called me to to him. He made me ſit beſide him. Your health, ſaid he to me, appears to be perfectly eſtabliſhed, and I wiſh to celebrate your recovery. He took a glaſs, filled it, and preſented it to me; then filled his own, and drank my health. Drink, monſter! ſaid I with-

in myſelf. To-morrow, at this hour, will I drink upon thy corpſe!

Thirty years have paſſed away ſince this terrible moment, and my hand ſtill trembles while I trace the horrible images which hurried through my mind. I was about to drink, when *Ferdinand* ſtayed my hand. My God! the gentle ſound of his voice yet fills my ear. And I! ſaid he: Do you not wiſh that I ſhould drink your health? What do you do, *Ferdinand?* cried I, with a terror of which I was not maſter. Who knows but——the truth was ſpringing from my mouth. *Urban* drew his lieutenant by the ſleeve. Obſerve, ſaid he, Don't you think he will grow ſtill ſtouter? What a charming acquiſition! This word alone drove back the diſcovery from my lips, and recalled all my former fury.

I roſe

I roſe and deſcended into the gun-room. Little notice was taken of my abrupt departure. The officer who had the watch was indiſpoſed; he requeſted *Ferdinand* to perform his duty, and I was alone till midnight. More at liberty, I abandoned myſelf without conſtraint to the ſerpents with which I was devoured. I was angry with myſelf, that the idea of puniſhing *Urban* was not mine. What would I not have done, to have executed it alone. I thirſted for all the glory, and all the pleaſure. But what do I! Let me rather draw a veil over theſe terrible thoughts which agitated my ſoul.

Toward midnight *Ferdinand* entered. You do not ſleep? ſaid he. No: anſwered I, with a bitterneſs which I could not reſtrain. Sleep is not for an oppreſſed man. I feel it, ſaid he with

with gentleneſs; but I have thought of you during the whole watch, and I am very glad you are awake, for I want to talk with you. He uttered theſe laſt words ſo impreſſively, that I thought myſelf diſcovered. A cold damp ſpread over my body. *Itanoko*, ſaid *Ferdinand* to me, we ſhall ſoon arrive; ſince yeſterday every thing announces the neighbourhood of the land. I am ignorant of my father's reſolutions reſpecting you; but be they as they may, it is poſſible you and I may be ſeparated. He may ſend me into Europe, or into ſome other part. He is my father, and I muſt obey him. While you are under my eyes, God is my witneſs, I will protect you at the peril of my life. But I may be abſent, and you will then be without reſource. Here are two thouſand crowns in gold. They are all I poſſeſs, take them. I have a friend at

St.

St. Domingo who is worthy of my confidence, and I will make you known to him. You ſhall depoſit this gold with him; and if my father ſhould ſell you to a ſtranger, while I am abſent, my friend will re-purchaſe you. The ſum is ſufficient to procure your liberty. Then take your departure, return to your own country, though I muſt never ſee you more. If my father ſhould keep you himſelf, my duty to him will not permit this; but ſlavery may appear hard to you, and I may not be there to ſoften it. The deſire of flight may ſeize upon you. This would be truly a misfortune, the greateſt perhaps that could happen to you: but the man that ſuffers does not always reflect. This money at leaſt will be of ſervice to you. Without it you would probably be retaken, and death would await you. At the worſt, you will

will have more hope of eſcaping the laws with it; there are few obſtacles which this metal cannot remove. Take it: it is yours. Whatever may happen, let the name of *Ferdinand* ever be dear to you: Never forget it. It is the only recompenſe which I aſk of you.

I cannot deſcribe what paſſed in my heart during this diſcourſe. I fixed my eye on *Ferdinand*. From whence comes this gold? ſaid I. Of what moment is that? anſwered he, with an aſtoniſhed air. Yet inform me, added I. It is the laſt requeſt which I make you. I ſaw a noble bluſh on his forehead, and his eyes were caſt down with ſhame. You want it, ſaid he, be ſatisfied. My father is rich. Every year he gives me nearly this ſum for my pleaſures. I give them to the unfortunate: you are unfortunate; and you have

have a right to my friendſhip. I accept it, anſwered I. At theſe words I roſe. I dreſſed myſelf with precipitation. Follow me! ſaid I to *Ferdinand.*——"Whither do you go?"—"Follow! I will ſhew you."

I mount the ſtairs without ſeeming to touch them. I arrive at *Urban*'s chamber. I open the door. *Ferdinand*, aſtoniſhed, follows me in ſilence. Riſe, captain, ſaid I, entering the room. I muſt ſpeak with you. What is the matter? What does he want? ſaid *Urban*, looking at his ſon. I do not know, replied *Ferdinand.* You ſhall know, ſaid I: riſe. He hurries on his cloaths, and I place myſelf between the father and ſon. See this gold! ſaid I to *Urban.* Hear what your ſon would do! I then ran through the converſation of *Ferdinand.* At preſent, continued

nued I, tell me how ſhall I requite this benefactor? What are you doing? cried *Ferdinand*. He is is mad, ſaid *Urban*. A fine employ of money!—— "No exclamations, captain, but anſwer me."—My eyes, my air, my tone aſtoniſhed him. Well, ſaid he, with embarraſſment, he is your benefactor, love him.——"Is that all?"—— What more can be? anſwered he. You will never be rich enough to return his money, which would be much better.——"Return! Is this the extent of European gratitude?"——Is not that enough, ſaid the captain.— "Not for a negro. *Ferdinand*, your virtue merits another price. You have ſaved my life; you would reſtore my liberty. Well, I will repay you. Behold your father. I return him to you. I ſave his life."—Heavens! cried they both.

See, *Urban*, continued I, the place in which we are. It was here that you received me; here that I implored your pity; that I poured out my ſecrets, and my ſorrows into your boſom. If this inſenſible furniture could ſpeak, it would all atteſt my candour, my confidence: but you—it would reproach you with perfidy, with avarice, with barbarity. If to ſuch crimes, you add the horrible paſſion of revenge, imagine the pleaſure which I muſt taſte in puniſhing the author of my torments; feel the ſacrifice I now make to gratitude. In ſome hours you were doomed to die. You, your ſoldiers, your ſailors, your ſon!—all would have periſhed. I did not conceive this deſign; my heart was incapable of it. But, from the moment it was communicated to me, it filled me with joy. I then owed only my life to *Ferdinand:* that was little. Now he would procure me liberty: this is every thing

thing to me. Such a benefaction cannot be paid but by a great effort. My wrongs, my vengeance, are all forgotten: and my debt is diſcharged. *Ferdinand*, there is your gold; I return it: and you, *Urban*, if your heart is capable of feeling what you owe to me, I ſwear to you both an eternal friendſhip.

Imagine, if poſſible, the aſtoniſhment, the joy, the tranſports of *Urban* and *Ferdinand*. They folded me in their arms; our tears were mingled; the delightful names of father, ſon, friend, deliverer, were confounded together. He ſaved your life my father! cried *Ferdinand*. Oh Heaven! recompenſe his virtue! Ah, rather, ſaid I, may heaven recompenſe your virtue, without which I had been criminal. Bleſs you both, added *Urban*, preſſing us to his boſom. Alas! it was not repentance which

which forced this exclamation from him. It was the joy of a man eſcaped from the extremity of danger. Such was *Urban*; ſuch did he remain to his death. No wonder: when man ſuffers himſelf to be ſubdued by a deſpicable paſſion, he becomes at length ſo corrupted that the examples of virtue do but paſs ſlightly over his heart.

They ſoon preſſed me to unfold the particulars of the plot, and I relieved their anxiety. *Urban*, who liſtened only to his ferocious feelings, ſpoke of nothing but tortures. Whom would you puniſh? ſaid I. Negroes? recollect that you owe your life to the ſacrifice of the juſt reſentment of a negro. Think of what they were; what they now experience; and the fate which awaits them; do not forget that they are men like yourſelf; then, if you dare, ſpeak of

of puniſhment! My dear *Itanoko*, cried *Urban*, if we do not terrify them by an example of ſeverity we may ſtill tremble for our lives. Away! I know them better than you, anſwered I. If you will employ rigour, deſtroy the laſt of them or I will not anſwer for your ſafety. Yet leave it to me to finiſh my work; only order theſe negroes on deck. How! ſo early? ſaid *Urban*. What does the hour import, anſwered I, when the cauſe is urgent?

Immediately the orders are given. *Urban*, who had not a ſoul which could imagine the generoſity of theſe oppreſſed negroes, armed his ſailors; and ranged them along the deck. The hatchways are opened. The negroes, ſurpriſed at the hour in which they are called, aſcend with aſtoniſhment. Soon they are all aſſembled. I take *Ferdinand* by

by the hand. Come, my friend, ſaid I to him: fear nothing. We advance into the midſt of them. They fix their alarmed looks upon me. I raiſe my voice: I recount my flight from *Damel*; my confidence in *Urban*; his perfidy; the tenderneſs of *Ferdinand*; his laſt inſtance of generoſity; finally, the ſcene of the laſt night. Then, I continued with vehemence: oh negroes, which of you would have courage to plunge the dagger into the boſom of his benefactor? Which of you, charged as I was with the horrid ſecret, would not have fallen with remorſe at the feet of his deliverer? But was it enough to ſave his life alone? Muſt he live only to wade in the blood of his countrymen? of his father? I have not had this ferocious courage. I could not ſave my friend to render him more wretched than I have ever been. Behold

hold him to whom I owe all! He whoſe virtues have ſnatched the fatal avowal which deceives your hopes. Fall at his feet. It is a negro, it is one of your countrymen, whoſe fetters he would break. Puniſh me alone. I have betrayed you. Take my life, it is yours. But reſpect his father, in him; as he reſpects you all, in me!

Scarcely had I finiſhed when a confuſed murmur roſe among them. They cried, negro thou haſt loſt us; but thou haſt fulfilled thy duty. All crowded round *Ferdinand*; each wiſhed to ſpeak to him; to touch the generous hand which had deigned to ſoften the miſeries of one of their countrymen. One of them cried: This, oh youth! This is the herb which would have delivered us! and he threw it into the waves.

I flew

I flew to *Urban*. "Remark theſe people whom Europeans treat with diſdain."

This was a day of joy: if ſuch there can be in ſlavery. Refreſhments were diſtributed with abundance to the negroes. The ſailors (one of the beſt as well as the rougheſt claſſes of men) moved with the ſcene, mingled with the negroes; and paſſed the day in diverſions with them.

The efforts which *Urban* had made, to expreſs his rapture on being ſo critically delivered, exhauſted all his generoſity. During ſome days, I perceived the eyes of his ſon purſuing him and eloquently pointing out to him his duty: his frozen ſoul did not underſtand them. I made no complaint; and, proud to have ſhewn in ſlavery all the energy of a free man, I left

Urban to reconcile himſelf to the diſgrace of continuing to hold me in bondage.

At length we ſaw land; and the next day we anchored in the port of Cape François, in the iſland of St. Domingo. *Ferdinand* deſcended firſt from the ſhip and I followed him. He haſtened to embrace his mother; while *Urban*, more occupied with his commercial concerns than conjugal tenderneſs, remained at the port to ſuperintend the debarking of his negroes. Every thing announced opulence in his houſe; but the worthy mother of *Ferdinand* was its moſt precious ornament. She was ſoon informed of my misfortunes, ſhe deigned to honour them with tears, and I perceived that ſhe deteſted the proceedings of an huſband whom decency reſtrained her from condemning openly.

I do

I do not dwell on the appearance, which every where preſented itſelf to me, of wealth, of pomp, and ſplendour; although a new ſpectacle to a negro who ſcarcely ſuſpects all the refinements of luxury, which the little ſentiments of pride, and the inconſtancy of civilized people have transformed into wants. That which made the greateſt impreſſion on me was, that noble familiarity between men; that flattering reſpect towards women; thoſe multiplied ſhades of delicate attentions, which would be ſo delicious if they took their riſe from the heart; and which are ſo abundantly found among theſe people. But too ſoon I perceived all thoſe charms were but a ſmiling maſk, a beautiful veil, merely deſigned to conceal deformities. I obſerved that the will of theſe coloniſts was rarely in union with their actions;

that their politeneſs, their friendſhip, even their love, formed rather a language of convention, than an expreſſion of ſentiment; that the man whom they overwhelmed with eſteem, the woman whom they intoxicated with incenſe, were ſacrificed without regret to the ſallies of wit; and that, while they were jealous of affecting a ſort of profound genius and reflection, they were ambitious of circulating an univerſal laugh. I ſaw that pleaſure was their ſole buſineſs, and laſſitude their faithful companion; that their deſires proceeded rather from their will than from their heart; and, in fine, that they were the dear idol of themſelves.

Yet has prejudice raiſed a barrier between the Europeans of the iſlands and us, which all the amiableneſs of the French has not the power to deſtroy.

ſtroy. In every thing which concerns a negro, gentleneſs, humanity, even decency diſappears. This engaging Frenchman is ſuddenly metamorphoſed into a tyger (8) who regards us with fierceneſs; invents new outrages to inflict upon us; and contemplates them with coolneſs. Love, if we may give that name to ſenſual emotions, even love cannot diſarm him; and the female negro ſometimes hears the order for her tortures, from the lips which had juſt laviſhed tenderneſs upon her.

Nay, the European women of the colonies, women whoſe ſenſibility ſhould conſtitute their glory, and who are convulſed at the little ſufferings of a ſpaniel, theſe very women will look, with cool attention, on the bloody ſides of an unhappy negro (9). An equivocal jeſt ſpreads a modeſt bluſh

over the faces of theſe ſame women, yet will they behold with unaverting eye the revolting ſight of a *bizar*, in which ſleeping negroes are crowded together without diſtinction of ſex. Such are the planters of the American iſles, ſuch their amiable companions. Europe would doubt the truth; if this truth had not been too often verified.

Urban treated me, during ſome months, with tolerable kindneſs: whether it was that he could not yet forget to whom he owed his life, or that he feared the reproaches of his ſon. I employed this calm to finiſh my education, which *Dumont* had commenced. *Ferdinand*'s zeal procured the beſt maſters to inſtruct me; and, my application ſeconding the diſpoſitions of nature, I could not only ſpeak and write the French language with preciſion, but I alſo

alſo acquired ſome notions of polite literature and the fine arts. Muſic above all was a delicious flattery to my taſte: with us ſhe is barbarous, here I found her worthy to be the ſiſter of the Muſes. I had ſome voice, and ſoon learned to ally it with the ſweet ſounds of the harp. I endeavoured by ſtudy to acquire reſources which might ſoften the rigour of a life, which preſaged only unhappineſs. *Ferdinand*, while he contributed to this, thought of rendering me, in other eyes, more worthy of the friendſhip which he bore me; and *Urban* did not forbid it, becauſe theſe talents attached a new price to his ſlave which flattered his avarice. Thus three ſentiments, altogether unconnected, concurred to form my education.

Ferdinand, although young and ſurrounded with ſeducing pleaſures, was not led by thoſe to neglect his duties.

When he cultivated in me the talents which give luſtre to man, he did not neglect religion which gives ſtrength to virtue. He brought me acquainted with father *Bruno*, the friend of whom he had ſpoken to me. I found in this eccleſiaſtic the friendſhip of a parent, the accompliſhments of a man of the world, and the zeal of an apoſtle. When he found me ſufficiently inſtructed, he conſummated his work by uniting me to the children of the church. Alas! I could not altogether preſerve myſelf from a painful reflection. How different, ſaid I, the circumſtances of this ceremony from thoſe which *Dumont* promiſed me! When I ſhould have paſſed from the font of baptiſm to the foot of the altar to be united to my *Amelia!*

My dear *Ferdinand*, and the perſon whom after him I moſt reſpect, deigned to accompany me. This was the amiable

able, the virtuous *Honoria*. She had long captivated the heart of *Ferdinand*. Surpaſſing him in graces, and the rival of his virtues, they were formed to render each other happy. Their parents had mutually conſented to their union, which was delayed only till *Urban* ſhould quit commerce, and ſettle his affairs. Thus had *Honoria* a right to look forward to felicity, but for a brother, the ſhame and horror of nature.

M. de C——, the father of *Honoria*, had an affection for his children, which led him into weakneſs and error; yet, though early a widower, his indulgence had no ill effect on his daughter. A happy diſpoſition continually corrected the faults of education. It was not thus with his ſon. Born in a burning climate, devoured by dangerous paſſions, ſurrounded with the wan-

ton luxuries of the American iſles, ſoon did he become abandoned to the moſt unbridled diſorders. His father perceived it; but, his tenderneſs ſubduing his reaſon, he neglected that paternal ſeverity which would probably have repreſſed the impetuoſity of a young man, who now braved his feeble remonſtrances. *Honoria* ſtood a gentle mediatrix between her father and brother. She hid from the griefs of one, the enormities of the other; ſhe conſumed her days in theſe cares, which were repaid with reiterated ingratitude.

The forbearance of *Urban*, with regard to me, was daily changing to a different conduct. His intereſt no longer compelled him to reſpect me; my health was fully re-eſtabliſhed; and I was as completely formed, as to height and muſcle, as it was probable I ſhould ever

ever be. My talents were well cultivated; and in ſhort I was, according to his manner of reaſoning, a precious ſlave, whoſe ſale could not fail to be uncommonly lucrative. He had no deſign now, but to enure me to the ſpecies of ſervice to which I was deſtined; and to bend my will, in good time, to every thing which the caprice of my future maſters might require of me: a quality which *Urban* thought wanting to make me complete. It was long before I perceived this change. Urged by my friendſhip for *Ferdinand*, even by gratitude for the ſpecies of calm which *Urban* ſuffered me to enjoy, I did every thing which his fantacy could ſuggeſt to him to command. Was there occaſion to fly to his diſtant poſſeſſions with his orders, to run ten times a day throughout the whole city, on the little concerns of his houſe, my activity kept pace with his will, and

my fatigues coſt me nothing. But at length I ſaw that every thing which I placed to the account of my good will, paſſed in his eyes as duties which were binding upon me. Inſenſibly the tone of the maſter ſucceeded to civility; and rudeneſs, in its turn, replaced the tone of the maſter. Then all the horror of my fate, which an illuſion had lulled during ſome months, awakened with renewed vigour. Is it this then that is reſerved for me! cried I with grief. Is it thus that I am ſlowly to approach this death which a new religion forbids me to haſten! Well! I will ſuffer with patience. But, Oh God of the univerſe! let my father, *Dumont*, *Amelia*, be ever ignorant of the wretchedneſs of *Itanoko!*

I carefully concealed my ſorrows from *Ferdinand*. I felt how his heart would be torn, and I feared ſtill more

to

to degrade a father in his eyes; yet he often ſurpriſed in my countenance the trouble of my ſoul. This ſight affected him, and I laboured, by a falſe appearance of ſerenity, to turn aſide the ſuſpicions I could not deſtroy. The father, who feared the virtues of his ſon as much as I dreaded the alarms of his friendſhip, never treated me harſhly in his preſence; but *Ferdinand* was not deceived. At length he appeared extremely dejected; he paſſed almoſt his whole time with *Honoria*; and I no longer could diſcover that air of ſatisfaction with which he had always encountered me. In vain I interrogated him; his attentive friendſhip always ſhunned a confidence which muſt have plunged a poignard into my heart. *Bruno* was my ſole reſource; in his boſom I poured out my ſorrows. He received them with compaſſion, and healed

healed my mind by the conſolations of philoſophy and religion.

One day a violent altercation aroſe between *Urban* and myſelf. A female negro of his houſe offended him; I was preſent. *Urban* ſeized a whip, the common inſtrument of the often unjuſt wrath of the planters, and in the preſent circumſtance too rigorous for a light offence. *Urban* preſented it to me, and ordered me to chaſtiſe the negro. Command me, ſaid I, with moderation, to do any thing for your ſervice, which I can execute without baſeneſs, and I will perform it with zeal; but do not require me to lay my hands on a timid woman, who is already aſhamed to have offended you. To chaſtiſe her who offends me, is to ſerve me, he anſwered haſtily. If the chaſtiſement be juſt, replied I, exerciſe it yourſelf.

yourſelf. It is not my duty to oppoſe it. Would you, cried he with fury, that I ſhould diſhonour myſelf by raiſing my hand againſt her? I think, ſaid I, honour is not more wounded by executing, than by giving an unjuſt order; but, be it as it may, honour is as dear to me as to you. The honour of a ſlave! the honour of a ſlave! repeated he, with irony. It depends only on my own will to be no longer this ſlave, and I thank you for the remembrance, I replied with paſſion. Had you always liſtened to the honour of which you are now ſo jealous, never would you have had the right to treat me as a ſlave. Does the wretch reaſon with me? exclaimed he, almoſt ſuffocated with rage. I ſaw him place himſelf in a menacing poſture. If, unfortunately he had ſtruck me, I had loſt myſelf. I perceived the danger; the door was open;

open; I threw myſelf out, and fled. Father *Bruno* was my refuge; more ſtrongly affected than uſual, our converſation led us far into the night. At length I took my leave, little ſuſpecting how long it would be before I ſhould return into his friendly houſe; and far from foreſeeing how much my friendſhip might coſt him.

When I returned, I learned that *Urban* was become calm; and had forgotten, or feigned to forget, our altercation. *Ferdinand* had retired; I aſcended to his apartment. The tender familiarity with which he honoured me, allowed me that liberty at every hour. I opened the door, I ſaw ſeveral trunks extended, and *Ferdinand* buſy in filling them. I cried out at this ſight, Ah, this tells me the cauſe of your ſorrow! It is this that you wiſh to conceal from

from me! You leave me! Oh God at what a time! It is too true, anſwered he; and would to God I could conceal it even from myſelf. I quit a mother, a lover, a friend! but my father muſt be obeyed. I loſe you, ſaid I. Alas! what will become of me! Who will now preſerve me from the fury of your father? At leaſt, your preſence taught me to ſupport his injuries. Can I now anſwer for myſelf? Be yet patient ſaid he, for another year. I ſhall not be longer abſent. On my return, I ſhall be united to *Honoria*; her deſign is to demand you of him, on the day of our marriage; decency will not permit him to refuſe the requeſt in the preſence of both our families. I can give you no further comfort, ſaid he, embracing me; and is not ſuch a hope, *Itanoko*, worth all that it will coſt you to buy it? But cannot I go with you? ſaid I. My father

father will not conſent to that, ſaid he. I have propoſed it to him. I have long ſince depoſited with *Bruno* the two thouſand crowns which you returned on the day of the revolt. It will be a reſource. *Bruno* will never abandon you: and *Honoria*, think you that ſhe will ever forget you?

He made ſome vain efforts to conſole me. I ſaw that he had reaſon on his ſide, yet it was of no avail; this fatal departure was to me the ſignal of all my future miſeries. I could not yet foreſee them, I could not even ſuſpect them, but I felt them; and, by a ſentiment which was inconceivable to myſelf, while I would have given my blood to have followed *Ferdinand*, I ſaw the accompliſhment of that very wiſh would have cauſed new anguiſh to me. It ſeemed as if my heart would have

have been torn from me, had I been driven from St. Domingo. I avow it to my ſhame : I know not if this terror had not as much ſhare in my diſtreſs as the loſs of *Ferdinand*. Be it that we have preſentiments of ill ; or rather that the active imagination of man is like a glaſs which reproduces, under a thouſand forms, the chagrins of the ſoul, who the dupe of this illuſion fancies ſhe ſees into futurity ; for my part, it has rarely happened that this ſtrange feeling has not given me alarms previous to all the great events of my life. It foreran the battle, the hour of my flight to *Urban*'s veſſel, the conſpiracy of the negroes : it preſſed upon me now, and it did not deceive me.

I concealed not from *Ferdinand* the involuntary contradiction of my ſentiments. He attributed this to the tumultuous

multuous ſcenes through which I had paſſed ſince my ſeparation from *Amelia*, and which had deſtroyed the natural equilibrium of my mind. We paſſed the night in mutual condolence. Alas! he was more courageous than I, while he ſuffered more. I was only to be deprived of a friend; he, of a friend and a lover. He informed me that his father, being about to quit commerce, was ſending him to France to wind up ſome affairs which were intricate, and required the preſence of one of them. He hoped a whole year would not be neceſſary for this purpoſe, and he ſhould probably return ſooner than he had given me reaſon to expect.

All was ready. The day of his departure arrived; the ſailors of the veſſel in which he was to embark came to carry away his luggage, and informed him

him that the wind was fair. At theſe words, melting into tears, I precipitated myſelf into his arms. Cheriſh, cried he, the principles which we have cultivated together; theſe will conſole and ſuſtain you; they will befriend you more powerfully than I; be faithful to them, they will not abandon you to miſery. We held each other long embraced without ſpeaking. He ſnatched himſelf from my arms. Carry my homage to *Honoria*, ſaid he; reſpect her, ſhe has promiſed me to watch over your happineſs.

He went to the apartment of his father who wiſhed to conduct him on board. They went out ſilently, to ſpare the tender heart of madam *Urban* the pain of a farewell. I followed them. *Urban*, dextrous at diſſimulation, appeared to have forgotten our quarrel of the preceding morning; he ſpoke

to me with gentleneſs. We took a boat from the port and were ſoon on board the veſſel. She was already under way; we remained but an inſtant in her. I ſeized the hand of *Ferdinand*. I laid it on my heart; it was the only action of which I was capable. His father embraced him twenty times. He loved him paſſionately. We deſcended into our boat; ſoon were we far from the ſhip which already proceeded rapidly. *Urban*, who had ſat down to conceal his tears (the only tears which he was ever ſeen to ſhed) turned his head; ſtill perceived his ſon; ſtretched out his arms toward him, till diſtance hid him from his ſight. It was his laſt adieu; never was he to ſee him more.

Inſtead of returning to land *Urban* ſhewed our rowers a Spaniſh veſſel which was anchored at ſome diſtance; and

and ordered them to conduct us to her. I took little notice of the order, yet I ſaw the viſit was premeditated, for the captain was on deck ready to receive *Urban*. I had never obſerved this man to be among his acquaintance; their connection ſurpriſed, but did not alarm me. *Urban* ſaid, captain I have juſt bid farewell to my ſon who has ſailed for France, and I am come to breakfaſt with you, and to ſeek ſome amuſement that may diſſipate my reflections. You are very welcome, replied the captain, conducting him into his cabin. As for me, I ſat down on the deck; and there, without reſtraint, delivered up myſelf to grief.

In about an hour a ſervant of the Spaniard informed me that my preſence was required in the cabin. I roſe and entered. *Urban*, the captain, and ſome officers,

officers, were converſing in the Spaniſh language; which *Urban* ſpoke extremely well. When he perceived me, he ſaid to me in French, with an air of familiar complaiſance (which he ſo well knew to uſe on occaſions) my poor *Itanoko*, you are as ſorrowful as I am; but you ſhall not refuſe to give theſe gentlemen an idea of your talents, to repay them for their kind reception of me. Come, take this harp; touch it, and accompany it with your voice. You know I am ſcarcely in a condition to ſing, ſaid I; but there is nothing I will not do to oblige you. Except to beat my negro woman, anſwered he. I was ſilent. I ſaw him ſmile and wink at the Spaniſh captain. Is it poſſible he can have informed him? ſaid I to myſelf. Then theſe Europeans have not the ſame modeſty as we. A negro would not ſpeak ſo willingly of his ſhame.

I took

I took the harp. I ran over a prelude; then, ſang theſe couplets.

Melodious lyre, that erſt could yield
Impaſſion'd ſounds, in friendſhip's praiſe,
Henceforth be mute; or be my grief
Henceforth the ſubject of thy lays:
The gen'rous act, the grateful heart,
Thy favourite theme no longer be;
For he, for whom thou'rt wont to ſwell,
No longer hears thy harmony.

Neglect and ſilence be thy doom,
Nor chear the night nor wake the morn;
In joyleſs apathy remain,
Like me, deſponding and forlorn:
Thy dulcet ſong no more muſt breathe
The mingling chords of mirth and glee;
For he, for whom thou'rt wont to ſwell,
No longer hears thy harmony.

When I had ceaſed they covered me with eulogiums; they praiſed my

voice, the facility of my execution, and the expreſſion of the couplets. I have never heard them, ſaid *Urban*; from whence did you take them? I made them for the occaſion, anſwered I. What extempore? cried all the company. That is impoſſible, added *Urban*. There is no great merit in it, returned I, when I have juſt bid your ſon farewell. Then the applauſes were redoubled. Such are in general the Europeans. A ſpark of talents throws them into enthuſiaſm.

But at Paris this ſpecies of extacy is no more than a mode. Theſe *Ephemerons*, pretty ſometimes, uſually inſipid, are received with tranſport: eſpecially by the woman. But how? while the ſinger or reciter of his own verſes ſimply imagines the whole circle have but one ear for him, the miſtreſs of the houſe

houſe trifles with her dog, a young abbé ſatirizes the head-dreſs of madam the counteſs, a petit-maître contemplates in a glaſs the brilliant reflection of his buttons or turns over the numerous toys of his watch, and a fine wit inceſſantly baniſhes ſilence by requiring it from the whole company; while a favourite phyſician avails himſelf of theſe moments to write the ſcandal of the morning on the tablets of a hypochondriac lady. The ſinger (or reciter) ceaſes: it is the ſignal; baniſhed attention flies back like lightning. It is charming, delicious, divine! The chorus ſhakes the houſe almoſt to the foundation. One of theſe complaiſant ladies, in the courſe of a day, viſited ten houſes with one of theſe amiable ſtanza manufacturers. Ten times he ſung, ten times ſhe entreated a copy of the verſes which cauſed her ſuch raptures.

One evening, an abbé looked over her port-folio. Ah! ſaid ſhe, there are ten ſongs of ſuch-a-one! Read, read! Each is more beautiful than another. Ah what an inexhauſtible genius! He opened, read. They were ten copies of the ſame ſong. How many enormous reputations have no other origin!

My couplets had a merit which I was far from ſuſpecting. They exactly ſuited the deſigns of *Urban*. I ought to have doubted the extraordinary kindneſs he laviſhed on me; but I was ſo occupied with my ſorrow as to pay little attention to what paſſed around me. He ſpoke a few words to the captain, who anſwered only by ſtriking the hand of *Urban*. Soon after we returned to the port. My firſt care was to viſit *Honoria*. I found her oppreſſed with ſorrow, and her tears renewed mine.

mine. She wiſhed to be informed of every thing that *Ferdinand* did; that he ſaid; till the moment of his departure. She feared that I ſhould hide even the leaſt geſture from her; and again, again, and again, ſhe made me repeat the ſame things. I ſpoke, by chance, of our viſit to the Spaniard, and, of what had paſſed in the ſhip. *Honoria* heard me with ſurprize, and was long loſt in thought. Do you know to what this viſit tends? ſaid ſhe. No, anſwered I; it does not affect me. But I am not ſo tranquil, returned *Honoria*. She ſaid no more on the ſubject; and ſoon after diſmiſſed me.

Her obſervation had ſurpriſed me. I could not conceive the meaning of it. The careſſes of *Urban* continued. They ſeemed even to increaſe; and this aſtoniſhed me more than the language of

Honoria. In the mean while, the Spaniſh captain came to the houſe. I remarked that he went away diſpleaſed; and ſome epithets, which he beſtowed on *Urban*, led me to ſuppoſe that there was ſome miſunderſtanding between them in their commercial concerns. I was not deceived; but little did I ſuſpect the ſpecies of commerce which was the ſubject of their quarrel. On the third day, ſcarcely had I ariſen when I was informed that a perſon aſked for me. I deſcended from my chamber, and found a ſtranger with *Urban*. Are you called *Itanoki?* ſaid he to me. Yes, I anſwered. It is he of whom you ſpoke, ſaid he to *Urban*.—"The ſame." After theſe two queſtions, the ſtranger ſat down at a table; took a pen, and wrote ſome lines. When he had finiſhed, he preſented the paper to *Urban*, who read and put it into his pocket. It is perfectly

fectly right, ſaid *Urban*. Then the ſtranger took ſome ſmall papers out of his pocket-book; while *Urban* ſat down at the table and wrote in his turn. Having finiſhed, he made a ſign to the ſtranger who approached and read the writing to himſelf. It is well, ſaid he, placing the ſmall papers which he held in his hand on the table, and adding, one, two, three, four, five, all at ſight on the bank of Bourdeaux. He folded the paper which *Urban* had written, and placing it in his pocket-book took his hat and cane and wiſhed *Urban* a good morning; then ſaid to me, come *Itanoko*. Whither? anſwered I. Follow the gentleman, ſaid *Urban* with a compoſed look. I ſuppoſed there was ſome commiſſion for me to execute, and I went out with him.

I followed him a long time without his ſpeaking to me. He walked very

ſwiftly. We went out of the city, and when we had advanced about five hundred paces into the country he ſaid to me: Undoubtedly, you know all *Urban*'s people?—"Perfectly, ſir." Obſerve then, added he, if there are any who follow us. I caſt my eyes as far as my view would extend, and ſaid to him I do not perceive one. He then ſtepped up to a garden gate which was near us; and opening it with a key we entered into a very pleaſant ſpot of ground, at the further end of which was a ſmall houſe. We went into this houſe, and he ordered breakfaſt. He made me ſit beſide him, and invited me to partake with him. This conduct, ſo uncommon in the American iſles, ſurpriſed, but did not diſconcert me. I placed myſelf at the table without ceremony, already prejudiced in favour of my hoſt: ſo true is it that a ſingle geſture, a word, is ſufficient to produce

produce this ſentiment. And why? becauſe the ſoul often paints itſelf by a trifle.

He ſpoke of indifferent things during breakfaſt; I anſwered him with an honeſt freedom; and he ſaid, you are worthy to be the pupil of *Ferdinand*. Then you know *Ferdinand?* ſaid I. No, he ſaid; this is the ſecond time I have been in the houſe of M. *Urban*, and yeſterday was the firſt; but I have heard of his ſon's worth. It was to place me in my career; and I celebrated my friend, my benefactor. You are an honeſt lad, ſaid he, riſing and ſtriking me on the ſhoulder. He then went to a deſk which was in the room, and ſat down to write a letter. I thought it was this for which I had to wait. A book was near me. I took it up and retired to a window to amuſe myſelf.

When he had finiſhed his letter, he rang the bell, and a negro appeared; he whiſpered to him, gave him the letter, and the domeſtic went out. Then he approached me, and renewed the converſation of our breakfaſt time. I began to wonder that he did not diſmiſs me; but, as I was perfectly ſatisfied, I did not expreſs my ſurpriſe. In about two hours, he looked at his watch. It is nearly noon, ſaid he, I muſt go to the 'Change. He prepared to go out; and I to follow him. His cook entered. Do not expect me to dinner, ſaid he. I ſhall not return till ſix in the evening. Take good care of *Itanoko*, and endeavour to amuſe him. But, ſir, ſaid I to him, with an air which marked my embarraſſment—and M. *Urban*, ſir——M. *Urban*, anſwered he with a ſmile, is no way uneaſy on your account; do you alſo be without inquie-

inquietude. This day is not perhaps the leaſt happy of your life. He left me.

What can he mean? What can this myſtery be deſigned to veil? Yet why alarm myſelf? ſaid I, after ſome moments ſilence; this man has perfectly the air of honour, nor are he and M. *Urban* obliged to confide their ſecrets with me. Shall I be pardoned this little vanity; but this circumſtance of my life perhaps beſt proves the uprightneſs of my character. I had ſo little fear of treachery, notwithſtanding the dreadful inſtances I had experienced, ſo little did it enter into my mind that even *Urban*, for ſome vile gain, could forget the ſacred engagements which he had to the man who had ſaved his life, and to his ſon whoſe deareſt friend this man was, that I had not the lighteſt

ſuſpicion, although the truth was palpable. Such too was my candour, that, if this ſuſpicion had ariſen, I ſhould at that time have driven it away as a crime. My only fear, in ſeparating from *Ferdinand*, had been that the moroſe temper of *Urban* would too often inform me of the horror of unjuſt ſlavery; my alarms had never proceeded further.

I therefore patiently waited the return of my unknown friend. I entered into converſation with his domeſtics; he had but three, the two whom I had ſeen, and an old free negro who amuſed himſelf in cultivating the garden. Theſe good people talked to me of their maſter's praiſes, as if they had long known me: an eulogium which is never deceitful. They informed me that his name was *Duménil*; that he was a broker

a broker of the 'Change. Every other broker is immenſely rich, ſaid one of them to me; as to him, this houſe is his only wealth. He has, however, as much employment as any of them; but he exerciſes it with a probity little known here. The houſe was pretty; but without any magnificence. The furniture, and every thing around it, had the enchanting air of propriety. While they led me throughout the whole, I endeavoured to recollect the face of the old negro; for his countenance did not ſeem unknown to me. I think I have ſeen you before, ſaid I to him. Certainly, anſwered he, often, at father *Bruno*'s. Now I remember, replied I; and is he known to M. *Duménil?* Yes, ſaid he, he is M. *Duménil*'s moſt intimate friend, and alſo the beſt I have in the world. He placed me in this houſe. We have travelled toge-

ther,

ther, for he was not always an eccleſiaſtic; but when he entered into holy orders we were obliged to ſeparate.

I am now more convinced, ſaid I to myſelf, that I have no cauſe for apprehenſion, ſince here is a friend of father *Bruno*'s. I paſſed my day without wearineſs; but not without conjectures concerning the cauſe which could have conducted me to this houſe. I hazarded ſome words to theſe domeſtics, which were deſigned as queſtions; but they led to no explications. I judged by their anſwers, that they knew as little of the myſtery as myſelf. As they returned to the theme of their maſter's virtues, I expreſſed my ſurprize that he had not taken a companion to his boſom. He has never been willing, ſaid the old negro, although frequent advantageous opportunities have

have preſented themſelves. He has a brother of whom he has not heard theſe twenty years. I have no doubt he is dead; but my maſter enjoys the chimerical hope of ſeeing him again: and it is to preſerve the unmixed right of dividing his little fortune with him, which has made him decline every engagement.

Duménil returned at ſix, as he had promiſed; and I ſaw him again with pleaſure. The diſcourſe of his people had confirmed my ſentiments of eſteem for him, and it was already almoſt friendſhip with which he inſpired me.

He enquired, with goodneſs, how I had paſſed the day; and I informed him with gratitude. You have been with good people, ſaid he, who obey me joyfully. It is that you command them

them with gentleneſs, anſwered I; which is not the mode in this country. You are right, ſaid he; and I am not among the laſt who pity the ſufferings of your countrymen. Are they without a remedy? ſaid I to him. I believe they are, replied he, till the ſupreme authority of the mother country ſhall interfere, and remove the evil. I will add, that depravity of manners is the fountain of that evil: while the reſources of luxury are found in your ſlavery, not a link of your chains ſhall be lightened.

Night was come. This is the hour, ſaid he, to give you ſome inſight into the buſineſs of this day. Your patience has been ſufficiently proved; follow me. I reſpected you too much, anſwered I, to queſtion you; and I have been without any uneaſineſs. I ſpoke the

the truth: however, I felt a ſtrong curioſity to pierce through the myſtery which had ſurrounded me ſince morning.

We left the garden, and took the road to the city. After running through ſeveral ſtreets, *Duménil* knocked at the door of an elegant houſe. My thoughts were ſo much occupied that I did not recollect the houſe. We entered. What was my ſurpriſe! *Honoria* was the firſt perſon who preſented herſelf to me. Ah! cried I, by what happineſs——Why did you not inform me that it was here I was expected. I would have come in the morning. That was preciſely the thing we did not wiſh, anſwered *Honoria* with a ſmile. Madam, ſaid *Duménil*, I have brought *Itanoko* ſafe to you; at preſent you have no further call for my ſervices, and I take my leave of you. How, ſaid *Honoria*,

noria, won't you ſtay and ſup with us? No, I thank you, anſwered he; you know how much fatigue I have had during the day; I muſt take a little repoſe. He bowed and retired.

I cannot, at preſent, develope all the events of this day: ſuffice it, that in this ſhort ſpace, friendſhip had done every thing that it could to ſave me, and every thing that might have produced my utter deſtruction.

Why, ſaid I, am I with *Honoria?* or rather, why in the houſe of her father, M. *de C——?* Why not conducted in the morning? Why not returned to *Urban?* *Honoria* had too much goodneſs not to hear my queſtions patiently. You ſhall know every thing, ſaid ſhe; but not now: an indiſcretion on my part might place your life in danger; judge

judge if I muſt not be ſilent. It was my duty to do what I have done; let that ſatisfy you. Suffer yourſelf to be over-ruled, and know that all depends on your obedience.

Her father appeared, in a little time. He careſſed me with friendſhip, and ſpoke to the ſame purpoſe as his daughter. He himſelf ſhewed me the apartment in which I was to ſleep for this night. With pleaſure I found there all my effects; they were conſiderable, but were dear to me only as I had received them entirely from the goodneſs of *Ferdinand*. I was now convinced that I had quitted *Urban* for ever. I found myſelf with friends who would protect me till the return of *Ferdinand*. It was the ſole wiſh of my heart.

For the firſt time, I ſuſpected that *Urban* had ſold me. The deſpicable

Urban,

Urban, ſaid I, reſpects nothing: to whom has he ſold me? To *Honoria*'s father? Has he, then, ſuch little ſenſibility as to brave the ſilent reproaches of his ſon? of her who muſt be his daughter? and, in ſhort, of myſelf?

A domeſtic drew me from theſe reflections. *Honoria* demanded my preſence. Her father was in the room with her. My friend, ſaid this reſpectable old man, let not the propoſition I have to make alarm you. In deſpight of my age, my credit, and the general eſteem with which I am honoured, you could ſcarcely remain here without danger. It is your intereſt and our's, that thoſe who know you and *Urban* above all ſhould loſe every trace of you for ſome time. What can this mean? ſaid I to myſelf: is it not then to them he has ſold me?

Fifteen

Fifteen leagues from hence, continued M. *de C*——, I have a plantation at the foot of the mountains which ſeparate us from the Spaniſh part of this country. It is a ſolitary place; there you will be far from all obſervation. You will be undiſturbed and at liberty to yield yourſelf, without reſerve, to your taſte for ſtudy. I have taken particular care of that object; and nothing ſhall be wanting to render you comfortable. My daughter and I will ſometimes viſit you. Time will ſlide away: it will lead *Ferdinand* back to us; then this ſpecies of exile will ceaſe, and affairs will take a very different aſpect. Whatever it may coſt me, ſaid I, to be ſeparated from ſuch friends, command: I am ready to obey you. Well, replied he, take a ſhort repoſe; a negro, who is in my greateſt confidence, has received my orders; you

you will depart together before day. I have charged him with my inſtructions for the overſeer of this plantation. You will receive from him the ſame attentions which you would here with us. But, ſaid I ſmiling, have you not the complaiſance to diſcover a ſecret which begins to intereſt me? May I not know ——To what purpoſe? ſaid *Honoria:* to torment you without any benefit. One day, you ſhall laugh at what afflicts you now. Then leave to friends, who know events better than you, the care of guiding you.

Compelled to ſilence by this anſwer, I kiſſed the hand of *Honoria*, and took my leave of her father. Be not uneaſy, ſaid he, as he embraced me: while I live, while my daughter ſhall live, we will preſerve you for the ſake of *Ferdinand.*

At

At three in the morning the negro awakened me. We ſtept into a poſt-chaiſe and departed. We were at the diſtance of three leagues from the city when day appeared. My conductor was pleaſed with the ſpeed we had made. He leſs feared (as I have ſince known) being purſued by thoſe from whom the carriage, although with M. *de C*——'s arms on it, would not have been able to protect me. This negro was an honeſt man, and very worthy of his maſter's attachment. He was born on the Gold coaſt, and had been brought a child to St. Domingo. The mother of M. *de C*—— had bought him, and made a preſent of him to her ſon. They were of the ſame age. M. *de C*—— afterwards went into the Eaſt-India company's ſervice. This negro followed him in various campaigns; and, in one engagement, was happy enough to

ſave

ſave his maſter's life. His immediate liberty had been his juſt recompenſe; but he had no ambition beyond the happineſs of paſſing his life with the man whom he regarded as a friend rather than a maſter.

We arrived the ſame day at the plantation. My conductor delivered his inſtructions to the overſeer, and enjoined him to adhere ſtrictly to them. I was ſhewn into a very agreeable apartment; and, after ſome refreſhment, laid me down to repoſe. My conductor, who had taken his leave of me, ſet off early the next morning for the city.

I paſſed near five months in this abode with ſome tranquillity. On one ſide, was preſented to the view a conſiderable chain of mountains, and vaſt ſhades

ſhades of dark foreſts; the aſylum of negroes who ſometimes ſeek for liberty far from their tyrants, and find only famine and death: on the other ſide a ſandy, deſert, plain which ſeparated theſe poſſeſſions from other cantons. Thus was formed a narrow tract of land which was watered by a ſtream that flowed from the mountains. The phyſical poſition of this plantation, the burning ſand and ſtormy mountains that encloſed it, even the awful ſilence which hung over the place, all ſeemed to have detached from the reſt of nature the field of a virtuous man.

Here for the firſt time I ſaw *Theodore de C——*, the unworthy brother of *Honoria*. Here far from his father's eyes he came, with the companions of his riots, to give free ſcope to his irregular paſſions; but that which chiefly ſerved him in theſe exceſſes was the

criminal complaiſance of the overſeer. I had time to develope the character of this man. He was one of thoſe whoſe crimes have baniſhed them from their country and driven into a foreign land, where they ſpread the vices with which they are infected. Aided by a certain ſpecies of talents, and lying recommendations, he had been introduced to M. *de C*——; he had obtained the management of this plantation; and, covering his rapines with an apparent zeal for the ſervice of his maſter, he advanced towards fortune by a way unhappily too much frequented. His yoke was a yoke of iron for the poor negroes. The labour of theſe unfortunate people would not have been immoderate, had they only to ſatisfy M. *de C*——; for he was a gentle maſter: but they were compelled to exceed the bounds he had preſcribed to gratify the avaritious extortions of the agent. It may

ſeem

ſeem aſtoniſhing that their complaints ſhould not have reached the ears of M. *de C*——; but thoſe who have ſuffered will know how timid an oppreſſed man is, and how powerful is the oppreſſor. The proprietor arrives. The agent never quits him. He points out thoſe, whoſe ſpirit he fears, as ſeditious ſlaves. If they ſhould dare to ſpeak, the proprietor (already prejudiced) gives little attention; and, as ſoon as he is at a diſtance, rigorous chaſtiſement expreſſes the vengeance of the exaſperated overſeer. Yet, in this will be ſeen too faithful a picture of the greater part of the plantations. Thus too often theſe maſters abandon the fate of a portion of innocent humanity to men, who by new crimes, recover at an extremity of the world the importance which former crimes had forfeited in their native country. The age of M. *de C*—— preſaged to the overſeer a new reign;

and, by flattering the paſſions of the young *Theodore*, he endeavoured to ſtrengthen himſelf in his poſt. His ambition went yet a ſtep further; by multiplied loans, which ſerved the diſſipation of the unhappy youth, he hoped at the death of the father to poſſeſs himſelf of this part of the inheritance: and thus to become maſter, after having been a deſpicable valet.

I was confirmed in my firſt ſuſpicions of this man's policy by the obſervation of ſome negroes who were pleaſed to make me the confidant of their grievances. The pity which I could neither refuſe to them, nor diſguiſe, rendered me the object of the overſeer's hatred. He alſo feared me as a dangerous witneſs to his conduct, who might ſoon unveil it to M. *de C*——. But his orders reſpecting me were ſo poſitive, that

that he dared neither to drive me from the place, nor even to diſoblige me.

Theodore at firſt regarded me only as a young man who would ſerve as a companion for his irregularities. He had not the uſual prejudice of the Europeans who think they diſhonour themſelves by admitting us to their ſociety: but it was debauchery alone which had given him this apparent philoſophy. It depended then on my own pleaſure ſolely to be always with him; but his amuſements were too far removed from my taſte to permit me to accept of an equality to which my principles muſt have been ſacrificed. I ſtood aloof with the reſerve which my ſituation ſeemed to require; and I was proud to have preſerved my inclinations pure, and not to have ſtained the dignity of man by the condition of ſlavery.

An imitator of the frivolous cuſtoms of the capital of France, *Theodore* had added, to the numerous train which ſerved him, an European equerry. It will be imagined that the luxury of height had been conſulted, as well as other perſonal qualifications, in the choice of this equerry. But *Theodore* little ſuſpected that he received this perſon from the hands of *Honoria*. Anxious for the fate of her brother, ſhe had contrived to place near him a man who would inform her of his wanderings; ſo as to enable her at times to prevent their conſequence, and at others to repair the evil. A friend of *Honoria* had engaged him in France. The equerry, inſtructed in the part he had to perform, preſented himſelf (as of his own accord) to *Theodore*. His figure was his immediate recommendation; and, in a little time, his maſter hid nothing from him.

I had

I had this detail from the mouth of the equerry, who was attached to me from the inſtant that he knew of the friendſhip with which *Theodore*'s ſiſter honoured me. He was a man of an amiable diſpoſition. Every time that *Theodore* came to the habitation I ſaw this equerry with pleaſure; except that our converſation uſually turned on the exceſſes of his maſter; for I could not be inſenſible to the conduct of one ſo nearly related to the deareſt friends I had in this part of the world.

After a long abſence, one morning, I ſaw my young friend enter my room. I was yet in bed. Ah, is it you? ſaid I, how long have you been here? —"We are juſt arrived."——"You are welcome, but I fear ſome new folly brings you here."——"Why, for this time, I am not in the ſecret; all I

know is, that it concerns a female of whom I have ſcarce had a glance. I think ſhe is a Mulatto. She was conducted here in a carriage with the blinds up; and we were in another. I am perſuaded ſhe is not content. I think I perceived her in tears. There muſt be ſomething marvellous in this matter, for during ſome weeks *Theodore* has kept her ſhut up in a houſe in the city, and has not ſuffered myſelf or any of his people to ſee her. This I learnt from the miſtreſs of the houſe, when we went to bring her away." ——" Without doubt you gave this information to *Honoria?*"——" Indeed I knew not what to tell her. I had no clue to the myſtery."——" No matter, my friend. You muſt not delay. You think this woman ſuffers; and your negligence may perhaps expoſe the virtue of an unfortunate woman."——

" Well,

" Well, I will obey you ; and commit the affair to *Honoria*'s prudence."

In the evening I took my uſual walk. I met *Theodore* and ſaluted him reſpectfully. I did not remark that there was any change in his deportment to me. The equerry afterwards informed me that no one entered the chamber in which this woman was confined but the overſeer, who carried her food. I ſighed over her fate. How ſhall ſhe eſcape, ſaid I, the baſeneſs of her beſiegers ?

The next day I received, for the firſt time, letters from my dear *Ferdinand*. He had happily addreſſed them to *Honoria*, who ſent them to me, accompanied by a letter in which ſhe informed me that ſhe would ſoon viſit me herſelf, and that the languiſhing ſituation of her father's health had alone

delayed this pleaſure. Her charming billet breathed the ſweet joy which filled her ſoul; and her love for *Ferdinand* gave new tenderneſs to the expreſſions of friendſhip.

Gracious God! at preſent, while placed in the boſom of happineſs, I retrace the varied ſcenes of an agitated life, a trembling ſeizes me as I reflect on the calm which reigns in my recital from the departure of *Ferdinand*. Perfidious ſerenity! which added ſtill more to the terror of the ſtorm that ſucceeded!

While my heart was yet full with the greateſt pleaſure which I had experienced for a long time, I left my room with a deſign of walking. I met *Theodore* on the ſtair-caſe. I reſpectfully ſtood aſide to give him leave to paſs me.

me. He fixed his eyes on me, glaring with choler. What do you do here? ſaid he, fiercely. Away, monſter, out of my ſight! and he paſſed me with precipitation, giving me no time to anſwer him. A moment I remained immoveable with aſtoniſhment. "What have I done to him? I know not." All emotion with this ſcene, I left the houſe to take the air. At a diſtance I perceived the equerry, who made me a ſign, and I ran to join him in a place where we could not well be obſerved. What have you done, ſaid he, to *Theodore?* He is outrageous againſt you.-----"I know nothing of it."----- And I recounted to him what had happened. I am not happy on your account, ſaid he.-----"What can he do to me? Am I not here under the protection of his ſiſter and father?" "Ah, you know not what a corrupt heart

dares to do. I wiſh you far from hence; take my advice, and haſten to *Honoria*."
-------" What ſhall I ſay to her? Will a little intemperate uſage of her brother excuſe me in this ſtep? It would be neither generous, nor decent. But what cauſes this alarm in you? what have you diſcovered?"-----" Nothing certain. He called me to him at midnight; he had juſt left this woman. A thouſand exclamations without order taught me that you were the object of his fury. I attempted to queſtion him. He impoſed ſilence; and threatened to diſmiſs me if I diſobeyed him. Without that, I ſhould have been with you in the morning; but I feared to be ſurpriſed."------" I may have paſſed him without perceiving him, and without paying the reſpect due to him."--------
" No: another idea has ſtruck me. Have you not formerly had ſome intrigue

trigue with this woman, which he may have diſcovered either by your language or ſome information from her? I know him better than you, his anger has all the teint of jealouſy."---- "It is impoſſible: I have not ſpoken to any woman ſince my arrival at St. Domingo. Alas, my heart has other ties." -----"So much the better, I am more tranquil. Yet be adviſed, ſhun his preſence. As ſoon as I have any thing to communicate I will ſee you again."

Although my conſcience did not reproach me, I could not conquer my uneaſineſs. I began to know the human heart ſufficiently to dread the deſigns of a man without principle. I reſolved on the only thing which prudence ſeemed to dictate. It was to confine myſelf to my apartment, excepting at the hours of repaſt, and thoſe

thoſe which I allowed to the pleaſure of walking, till the volatile character of *Theodore* ſhould lead him from this place; or the promiſed viſit of *Honoria* ſhould deliver me from this voluntary impriſonment. Vain precautions! The villain had already ſworn my ruin.

I paſſed two days in great anxiety. I could not ſee the equerry. He knew that he was watched, and did not dare to come near me. I eat as uſual with the overſeer, who affected a profound ſilence on all that paſſed around us. I had not again met with *Theodore*, ſo that I knew not if he had forgoten his reſentment. The ſecond day in the evening we were at table. He entered: each roſe out of reſpect. He ſeemed in a frenzy. His hair was ſcattered, his dreſs in diſorder, his eyes were on fire, and his face glowing with rage.

What

What does this vile ſlave do here? he cried out. Why is he not with the wretches of his ſpecies? Call the commander, (the negro who conducts the others to work). If all white people were juſt, ſaid I to him with ſome emotion, you would not have the power of treating me as a ſlave. As it is, I am not yours: I owe my accommodation in this place to thoſe who alone have a right to command here. Who commands here if not I? ſaid he, paſſionately. Your father ſtill lives: I replied, raiſing my voice. The overſeer then ſaid, with a hypocritical tone under which he ſought to conceal his triumph, he is right, my lord; your father has confided him to my care, and he is a worthy youth. I interrupted him with diſdain. "Spare your eulogiums: a worthy man debaſes himſelf when he ſuffers the wicked to praiſe him."

him." The commander entered ; the vile overſeer, whom my laſt words had irritated, cried, my lord, the raſcal braves you. He forgets his reſpect to me too ; order him to chaſtiſement. I do : replied *Theodore*, foaming with wrath. No longer maſter of myſelf, at the hazard of whatever might happen, I flew to a hanger which lay on the table. I ſeized it. Tremble wretches ! I cried. The raſh villain who dares approach me, will I immolate at my feet. Rarely does courage ſuſtain vice. My geſture, my elevated voice, the forces of my body fully develloped by paſſion, held them all enchained with terror. *Theodore* and the overſeer flew to ſeparate corners of the room ; and the former, in a low timid tone, ſaid only----commander, lead him away. As he made no haſte to obey, I contemplated, for

ſome

ſome moments, pride and baſeneſs ſubdued. Theſe then, ſaid I to myſelf, are the paſſions of Europeans. Injuſtice, ferocity, and cowardice! This reflection calmed me. Pity returned in behalf of *Theodore*. Recover yourſelf, ſaid I to him. I will never forget that *Honoria* is your ſiſter: but do you never forget, that when you menace a negro you force him to recollect that he is a man. Lead, commander: I follow you! Without quitting the hanger, I paſſed with a firm ſtep between *Theodore* and the overſeer, and went out with the negro.

NOTES.

NOTES.

(1) ALL the ſovereigns of Africa are thus diſtinguiſhed by various names; which, according to the different languages of the nations that they govern, are equivalent to the title of king. Such are *Siratik*, *Damél*, *Brack*, *Congo*, &c. Vide: Voyages to the Gold Coaſt, to the Slave Coaſt, &c. collected by the Abbé *Prevot*.

(2) M. *de Buffon* ſays, the vulture is a bird which, endued with a ſtrength equal to his grandeur, is yet of a cowardly character. The firſt of birds of prey, after the eagle, he has no part of the eagle's courage: he never attacks a living animal, but preys on carcaſes alone.

(3) The

(3) The *Fetiche* is an inferior divinity of the inhabitants of the coaſt of Guinea. Each kingdom, each province, each city, each negro, in fact, has his *Fetiche*. The object which firſt ſtrikes the attention of a negro, becomes the emblem of this ſtrange divinity. A tree, a mountain, a pebble, a ſtone, a tooth or bone of an animal, a piece of iron, a branch of a thorn, and objects yet more inconſiderable, are ſuddenly honoured with religious worſhip, and are placed with reſpect either in their houſes, or on altars erected in the open air. It is not certain whether the negroes invoke this deity as a protecting genius, or a malignant being. To ſwallow ſome ſmall part of their *Fetiche* is the moſt awful of their oaths: a negro never violates it.

(4) This practice of ſtealing negroes, ſuperlatively infamous as it is, is however much uſed by the dealers in the ſlave trade. The temptation, to theſe ſort of people, is great.

To

To them, it is pleaſant to ſell, for a conſiderable ſum of money, that which has coſt them nothing.

Father *Labat* informs us, that three queſtions, on this ſubject, were propoſed to the Sorbonne. It will be difficult, at preſent, to read theſe queſtions without ſmiling. We ſhould ſcarcely preſume they could be the objects of a doubt. But read them :

1ſt. May the merchants, who purchaſe ſlaves in Africa, or the clerks who reſide at their factories, purchaſe negroes that are ſtolen ? (why not have added : may they ſteal them themſelves ?)

2d. May the coloniſts of the American iſles buy indifferently all the negroes who are offered to ſale, without enquiring whether they are ſtolen, or otherwiſe ?

3d. What reparation ſhall one or the other of theſe be compelled to make, who ſhall

ſhall have knowingly bought negroes who were ſtolen?

We need not be doctors of the Sorbonne to reſolve theſe difficulties. We, at once, ſee what the anſwer muſt be. But we alſo ſee that the coloniſts take good care not to ſubmit to the deciſion: for avarice and theology uſe not the ſame logic. Theſe coloniſts ſay, that the doctors of the Sorbonne have neither plantations in the iſles, nor any intereſt in the trade; and that, had they been in either ſituation, they would have decided otherwiſe. This victorious reply has, as will be ſuppoſed, ſubdued every thing. They have continued to ſteal men without remorſe.

And this practice ſhould ſeem to be innocent; for thoſe who are engaged in it would moſt aſſuredly hang the thief that ſhould ſteal a toy, and alſo the perſon who ſhould be the receiver of it.

But

But with them, a watch, a ring, a ſnuff box, are a very different ſort of a thing from the liberty of a man.

(5) This deſcription, horrid as it may appear, is yet conſiderably ſoftened. In fact, the negroes are chained two together on board of the ſhips with heavy fetters of iron, from which they are never relieved during the whole voyage. They are compelled to deſcend into the hold, not by any ſtair-caſe or even a ladder, it is only by the help of a beam in which, nitches are cut, at certain diſtances, to ſuſtain the feet. The unfortunate negro who is not ſufficiently nimble to run ſwiftly down this terrifying ladder, is puſhed headlong without compaſſion by the inſolent ſailor. The conſequence is a fall of twenty feet; and a univerſal laugh is all that is excited in the crew by the ſufferings of the unfortunate negro, who, ſtuned by his fall, waits to receive from nature the conſolations which his brutal aſſaſſins rarely think of giving him.

The

The negroes, in general, arrive at the iſlands emaciated by hunger and thirſt; their limbs benumbed by the weight of their fetters; and often eaten up by the ſcurvy: add to theſe evils, the anguiſh which they endure in being torn from their country, (the crueleſt of all evils for a negro), and the excruciating, though abſurd, opinion which they entertain, that they are tranſported from their homes to be eaten by other human beings, and ſome idea will be formed of the torment which wounds theſe unhappy creatures during a long vovage. They arrive at the port: what do they find? Extreme labour! tortures! and men, proud of their intelligence, and who call themſelves humane!

(6) The Engliſh parliament has been lately occupied in determining the number of negroes that each veſſel ſhould carry in proportion to its ſize and burthen. Man is as inconceivable in the operation of his com-

compaſſion, as in that of his cruelty. This meaſure has very little excited the attention of Europe; yet are all eyes eagerly fixed on the proſecution of Mr. Haſtings. But what is the import of the two queſtions? If Mr. Haſtings is innocent, he is an oppreſſed man; if he is guilty, there are comparatively ſome few people injured; and, in this proſecution, both ſides have wealth and eloquence to ſupport them, and friends to conſole them: while the cauſe of the negroes concerns thouſands of men who ſuffer at preſent, who have ſuffered for ſome ages paſt, and who may yet ſuffer during many more ages. Nor are there any crimes of their's to be diſcuſſed. Their innocence and their misfortune march conſpicuouſly together. But what avails their innocence or misfortune? They have no celebrated orators to plead for them; they have no riches to caſt a luſtre around them; they have no powerful friends who may give them their public tears!

(7) *Lewis* XIII. would not conſent that the firſt coloniſts ſhould have any ſlaves. His repugnance was founded on that principle, as ancient as honourable for the nation, that countries, ſubjected to the dominion of France, ſhould render free all theſe who came to inhabit them. It was repreſented to him that ſlavery was the only means of drawing the inhabitants of Africa from idolatry, of inſpiring them with the worſhip of the true God, and of preſerving them in Chriſtianity to their death. *Lewis the Juſt* yielded to this reaſoning.

May it not even be ſaid, at preſent, that the coloniſts boaſt that the act of enſlaving the negroes is a virtue? A letter written to the king, by the inhabitants of the French American iſles, to requeſt to be admitted to a repreſentation in the eſtates-general uſes (in the recapitulation of the ſervices they have done their country, and which they imagine intitles them to the favour) this expreſſion---*We have been to Africa to bring an entire people hither.*

(8) There

(8) There are, doubtleſs, ſome of the coloniſts who treat their negroes with humanity; and among the firſt of theſe is the Marquis *de Bichi*. He is the proprietor of fifteen hundred negroes, and treats them with ſuch gentleneſs, that it is very rarely that any of them are found among the deſerters who are taken from time to time. But there is one thing which almoſt ſeems incredible: it is, that the natives of France, who are led to the American iſles either by their duty, their intereſt, or their pleaſures, exceed even the coloniſts in their barbarity to the unfortunate negroes. A young man, of a good family, went to St. Domingo. He was no adventurer; he was rich; well educated; and powerfully recommended. His manners were marked by true politeneſs, and ſeemed to expreſs a ſenſible and feeling mind. Could any one imagine what was his frequent amuſement in his own houſe? Sitting in a chair, with a whip in his hand, he would endeavour to ſtrike with dexterity a hat placed at a certain diſtance.

Economic man! He would not permit his awkwardneſs to rob his ferocity of a ſingle blow that he had deſtined for his poor negroes.

I have known people, otherwiſe amiable, who looked on theſe cruelties as merely a matter of courſe. They have ſaid to me, we muſt treat them with ſeverity.——But why?——Becauſe they are negroes. Their reaſon never could proceed a ſtep further.

(9) One of my friends had been two days at Cape François, and already had the ſufferings of the negroes ſtrongly affected him. One morning, he heard a noiſe in the ſtreet, and ran to the window. What did he behold? A young, beautiful, elegant, European woman, with rage in her eyes, and a large ſtick on fire in her hand, purſuing a female negro. The unfortunate creature was naked to her waiſt. The lady overtook her; threw her down; loaded her with outrages;

outrages; ſtruck her; and tore her breaſt in ſeveral places with the infernal fire-brand. The ſcene laſted long; for depraved women are more indefatigable than men in acts of wickedneſs. The unhappy negroeſs betrayed not an emotion of anger; ſhe opened not her mouth; her countenance alone expreſſed her grief. And what was her offence? She had forgotten to ſerve the favourite cat with its breakfaſt.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.